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ditions and Transitions: History of the Raleigh Baptist Association

1943–2005

by Roger Crook

Traditions and Transitions

A History of the Raleigh Baptist Association

1943–2005

By
Roger H. Crook

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Introduction

Anniversaries are an arbitrary, and therefore relatively unimportant, way of marking progress. Chronological age is the only real information they can report. What difference does it make that the Raleigh Baptist Association turned two hundred years old in 2005?

The story of those two hundred years is another matter. It is the story of a Christian people living their faith in community with one another—worshipping and ministering and proclaiming the gospel. The first one hundred and fifty years of that story was recounted by William Richard Eaton in his *History of the Raleigh Baptist Association.*

But 1955 was in no sense a focal point in the history of the Association—it was merely the sesquicentennial. In the mid-1940s some decisions were made that transformed the Association. Eaton, of course, had no way of knowing how significant those changes were.

We know now that the Raleigh Baptist Association is not merely a continuation of the organization that was born in 1805. Rather, it is a reformation, retaining the fundamentals of the old but taking a radically new shape. With the benefit of hindsight, therefore, this volume begins with a review of the events of the 1940s in order to understand the present.

This volume will certainly not be the last word. As the churches of the Association continue to work together they will face new challenges, make important decisions, and find new ways of ministering. In ways that we cannot know, what they are doing now will necessarily impact the future. And in ways that we cannot predict, things will be different.

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Chapter One

Restructuring the Association 1943–1950

Two major decisions about the structure of the Raleigh Baptist Association were made in the 1940s. Both were reported in William Richard Eaton's *History of the Raleigh Baptist Association*, published in 1955 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Association. While Eaton recognized them as significant, he had no way of knowing just how important they were. No one could have predicted the developments that would soon take place. Only the passing of time could reveal the wisdom of those who made the decisions.

Both decisions were made when life was anything but normal. After teetering on the brink for years, our nation was brought into World War II on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. During the war years, millions of our young people left home and community and church to serve in the armed forces, and the war experiences of those who survived forever marked them. For those who remained at home, family life was disrupted, farms were mechanized, manufacturing was revolutionized, material goods were rationed, and it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between loyalty to the nation and faithfulness to God. The war in Europe formally ended with the surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945, following an unbelievably bloody campaign through France, the Lowlands, and Germany. The war in Asia ended with the surrender of Japan on August 14, 1945, after the United States had dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The nation never returned to its pre-war way of life. The war had set in motion a process of social change that would continue indefinitely.

No area of the nation was unaffected, and what happened in Wake County reflected the transformation of the nation. One of the most immediate changes in Wake County was the significant, and not entirely unexpected, growth of the population. During the decade of the '40s it increased from just under 47,000 to more than 65,000. Soon the other towns in the county would begin to grow. The population change reflected a nationwide pattern of migration from rural areas to urban centers. It does not necessarily reflect a preference for urban life. Rather, it was a matter of going where employment could be found. Indeed, Raleigh did not grow at the expense of the rural areas of Wake County, but rather by the influx of people from outside the area.

A second change was the altering family relationships. The number of married women employed outside the home began to rise during the war, and continued to rise after the end of the war. The divorce rate went up during the war and continued to rise throughout the '40s. The average time span between marriage and divorce decreased, and so did the birth rate. The rate of births to unmarried women, however, went up. And the mobility of the population, which took people not only from rural areas to the cities, but also from one side of the country to the other, weakened ties with the extended family.

Another change was a nationwide upsurge of interest in religion. We do not know all the reasons for that development, but surely the difficulties of the economic depression in the 1930s and the anguish of the war in the 1940s aroused in people a yearning for the security of eternal truth. The response to the work of Billy Graham, whose evangelistic career began about 1945, shows that "the field was ripe unto harvest." And perhaps this yearning explains the popularity of such best-selling books as Rabbi Liebman's *Peace of Mind*, published in 1946, and Bishop Fulton Sheen's *Peace of Soul*, published in 1949. At any rate, church membership soared from 49% of the population in 1940 to 57% in 1950. A poll taken in 1942 showed that 36% of the people had attended church at least once during the previous week.

A fourth change was the rising challenge to the patterns of racial segregation and discrimination. Like the rest of the South—and indeed, like much of the rest of the nation—Wake County was rigidly segregated racially. Nationwide, however, the laws sanctioning segregation had been under attack for years. Discontent among African-Americans had intensified during World War II, and in the post-war years court decisions

began to destroy the legal sanctions for segregation in transportation, public services, and higher education. In the late 1940s the people were aware that a challenge to segregation in the public schools was just beginning to make its way through the courts. Not directly affected by court decisions, the churches of the Raleigh Baptist Association nevertheless functioned in a society in which the people were deeply involved emotionally and legally.

A fifth change factor was the fear of the spread of Communism. Although the Soviet Union had been an ally during World War II, we never forgot that Communism was a radically different economic and political system and that the Soviet Union was committed to its expansion. And we never forgot that Communism was a militantly atheistic philosophy which sought to eliminate all forms of religion. For many years after 1945 the United States was involved in a "Cold War" with the Soviet Union. Many religious leaders—Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, liberal, conservative, fundamentalist—warned of the dangers of Communism. When, in 1950, Senator Joseph McCarthy launched his now-infamous anti-Communist crusade, he touched raw nerves. Consequently, in many states, including North Carolina, the legislatures passed laws prohibiting Communists from speaking on the campuses of state universities.

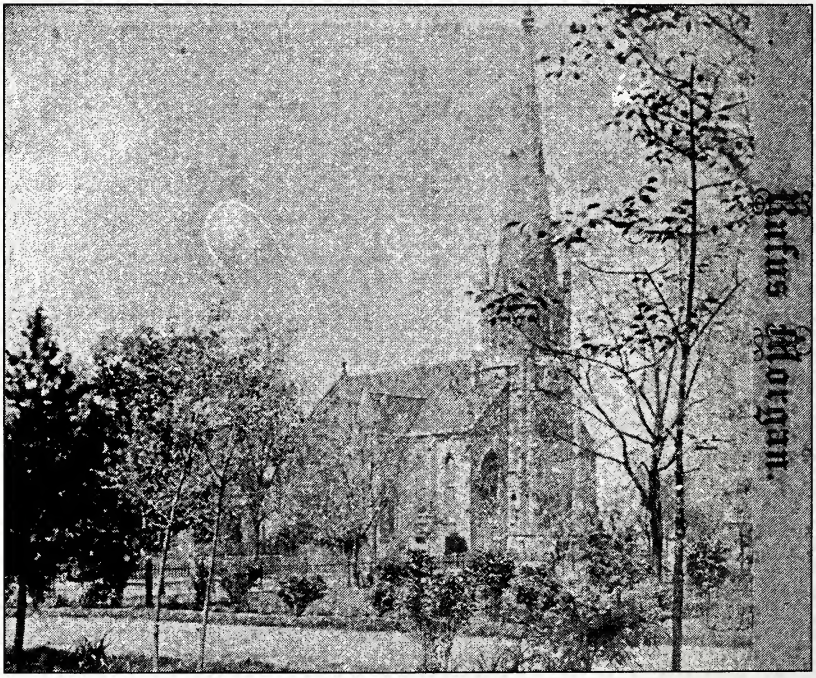
Yet another element, more difficult to put our finger on, was the general mood of the nation in the post-war years. That mood was a strange mixture of pessimism and optimism. Having emerged from a decade of depression only to be caught up in the anguish of the years of war, we were haunted by the fear of what might happen next. Aware of the devastation wrought by the two atomic bombs which we had dropped on Japan, we were haunted by the possibility that the whole world might be destroyed by atomic warfare. Even the early messages of Billy Graham fueled such pessimism. In a much-publicized sermon preached in 1950 he said, "I believe the judgment hand of God is about to fall upon you tonight.... We may have another year, maybe two years ... [then] ... I believe it's all going to be over.... I said in Los Angeles one year ago that we had five years."

Yet people persisted in looking to the future with a degree of hope. They prepared for careers. They bought clothes and automobiles and jewelry to satisfy desires of the moment. They made long-term investments in real estate and life insurance and health care programs. They married and had children. They were interested in the education of their

children, they cared about what happened in the government, and they invested their time and their money in the church. One sociologist of religion, Robert Wuthnow, described the post-war situation in very upbeat terms. Saying that people were no longer concerned with the theological distinctions of the past, they adopted a new and forward-looking approach. He observed:

> Stripping away the peripheral creeds, doctrines, and styles of worship, replacing them with a renewed emphasis on the essence of Christianity, was seen as a way of reinvigorating American religion. It was as if the stormy years of war had purged the air of traditional assumptions, allowing a fresh wind to blow across the religious mindscape. Faith had formerly been weakened by differences and nonessentials; now,

First Baptist Church of Raleigh



> if only Christ could be preached, rather than denominational distinctives or ethical programs, great strength could be realized. Streamline the faith, some suggested, do away with picayune differences; just focus, as one layman recommended, on "God as the loving Father of us all, and Christ as the way to God." (*The Restructuring of American Religion*, p. 37.)

Wake County changed significantly during those post-war years. As the population increased, so did the traffic. A growing number of private cars traveled poor roads in the rural areas, and in Raleigh they competed with a plethora of buses and taxis for space on streets not designed for heavy traffic. As early as 1946 efforts were under way to create a "Master Transportation Plan." Passenger patronage of the trains was so great that a new depot was constructed. North Carolina State College mushroomed and the city's private colleges—Meredith, Peace, Shaw, Saint Mary's, and St. Augustine's—were overcrowded. New businesses were begun, Cameron Village was constructed, governmental agencies grew. Two independent newspapers vied for a county-wide readership—the morning *Raleigh News and Observer* and the afternoon *Raleigh Times*. Capital Broadcasting Company's WRAL-TV went on the air, theaters were opened, and university athletics became big business. Two different school boards operated two public school systems—one for the city of Raleigh and the other for Wake County.

The Merger of Two Associations

Against that background we consider two major developments in the life of the Association. The *first* was the merger of the Raleigh Association with the Central Association, which was initiated in 1943 and completed in 1944. The two associations were not merely next-door neighbors—at points they overlapped! The Central Association had been organized in 1860, with seven churches. Two of those churches had come from the Raleigh Association, three from the Tar River Association, one from the Flat River Association, and one was a newly-constituted church. Over the years, in addition to receiving newly-constituted churches, Central gained several other churches from neighboring associations, including Raleigh's First Baptist, which joined in 1861.

How did that merger come about? We do not know what led up to it. But at the afternoon session of the Raleigh Association on October 23, 1943, Charles B. Howard, representing the Central Association, "stood and proposed to the Raleigh Association that we two associations be married. He stated that Central was going to marry somebody and wished very much it might be Raleigh." After some discussion, the motion was passed almost unanimously "that we look with favor upon their request and take necessary steps to bring this about," and the executive committee was instructed to meet with the executive committee of the Central Association to work out the plans for the merger. At that time there were thirty-four churches in the Raleigh Association and thirty-four in the Central Association, so that, in a sense, the merger would be a marriage of equals!

The merger took place without any apparent difficulty. The executive committees of the two associations met in the spring of 1944 and completed the transaction. They elected a set of officers, planned for a Fall meeting of the combined associations, and voted to recommend that the new organization be named "The Raleigh-Central Association." They appointed a committee to prepare a constitution for adoption at the 1945 annual meeting. The committee worked rapidly and reported a year early. When the Association met on October 26, 1944, only one year after the merger proposal had come to the Raleigh Association, it was approved and the merger was completed.

The newly-adopted constitution was short and straightforward. Articles II and III were devoted to organizational matters. **Article I**, however, dealt primarily with the character of the Association. It begins by saying that the association was to be called "The Raleigh Baptist Association," rejecting the recommendation of the Executive Committee that it be called "The Raleigh Central-Association." It further specified that the Association was to be composed of "pastors and messengers chosen by the local churches," and that churches were to be accepted into membership after examination of their credentials and recommendation by a membership committee. The last section made a significant change in the statement of purpose. The earlier constitution of the Raleigh Association had said that the purpose of the Association was to "perpetuate an union and communion amongst us, and preserve and maintain a correspondence with each other in our union." The new constitution stated that "The Primary Object of the Association shall be to

foster evangelism, Christian education, Missions, and benevolences, and such other objects as may be fostered by the State and Southern Baptist Conventions." Saying nothing about "communion" or "correspondence," it concentrated on support of certain activities and cooperation with the broader denomination. Three observations seem pertinent. *First*, while the word "merger" might be correct, there is no indication of any continuity with the Central Association. The transaction seems to have been more of an absorption of one Association by another. It is true that churches and individuals who had been active in the Central Association became active in the Raleigh Association. Indeed, what happened certainly strengthened the Raleigh Association. Nevertheless, when Eaton wrote his *History of the Raleigh Baptist Association of North Carolina, 1805–1955*, he did not include the story of the Central Association, which was organized in 1860 and continued to function until it merged with the Raleigh Association in 1944. *Second*, the Association is tied in very closely with the broader denominational organization. Its programs are, by implication at least, and by practice as history shows, reflections of the programs of the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. And *third*, the merger of the two associations gave the numerical and financial strength that was necessary for the success of that other major decision made by the Raleigh Baptist Association.

An Employed Leader

That second decision had to do with the employment of an Associational Missionary. The first hint of any such possibility had appeared in the 1943 report on Sunday School Work, presented to the Association by L. L. Morgan. One comment in that report was that we "Look toward the time when we can have a full time associational missionary to lead in all phases of our work." That hope was quickly realized. One of actions of the combined Executive Committee at its initial meeting in the spring of 1944 was to name a committee, comprised of F. Orion Mixon, Fon Scofield, and C. P. Green, "to consider the advisability of recommending to this Association the election of an associational missionary."

By the time the Association met on October 26, 1944, the search committee had done its work and was ready to make a recommendation.

Early in that meeting, in presenting a report on the work of the Sunday School, Fon Scofield anticipated the Association's approval of a recommendation from the Executive Committee by saying, "As this report is written the prospects are good that we will have a missionary working in our association in the near future. We, of the Sunday Schools are looking forward to his direction and guidance and would assure him of our best cooperation." Later in the day the Association did indeed approved the recommendation that the Association "call to a full time ministry among us Rev. H. Fletcher Lambert, pastor of The Front Street Baptist Church of Statesville, N. C." He was to work under the direction of a committee of the Executive Committee, and his salary was to be paid by the Home Mission Board and the State Mission Board. He began his work on January 1, 1945.

Lambert was a native of Stanley County, North Carolina. He had earned an A.B. from Wake Forest College and after teaching and serving as principal for a time at Liberty High School in Maxton, N. C. he went to Louisville, Kentucky to study at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. While he was a seminary student he began his pastoral ministry in 1928, at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bethlehem, Kentucky. He had become pastor at Front Street in 1935, and remained there until he was called to the work with the Raleigh Association.

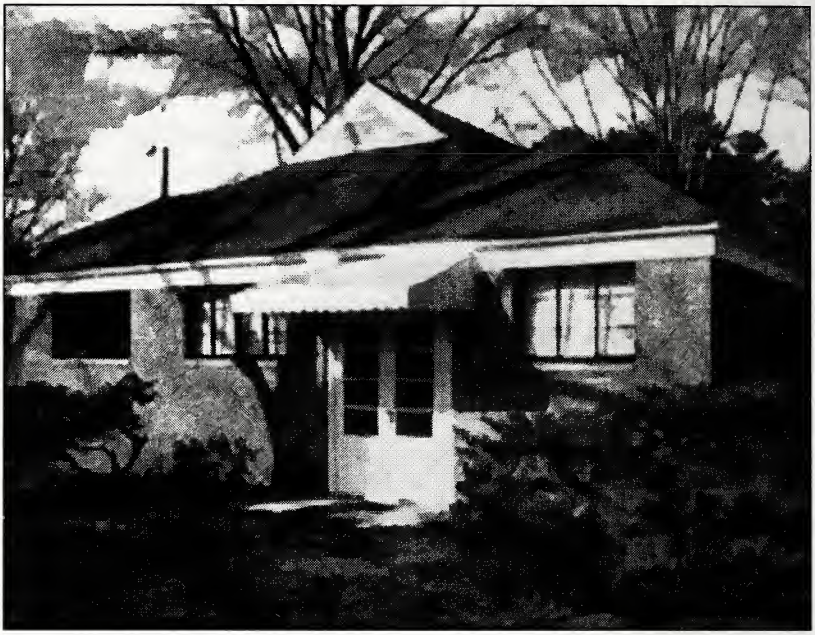
Up to this point the Raleigh Baptist Association had been a low-budget operation. The finance committee's report in 1943, the year before the merger, showed that the total receipts from the thirty-four member churches was $472.33, and the total disbursements was $180.09. The main expense was the publication of the Minutes. The only salary paid anyone was $30 to the Clerk of the Association. But the employment of an associational missionary entailed a sharp increase in the Association's financial obligations. As noted, initially the missionary's salary was paid by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Mission Board of the Baptist State Convention, but the rest of the expenses were the obligation of the Association. In the same action in which the Association voted to employ Lambert they also approved setting up a $2,000 budget to support the work, "the money coming from our various churches who will pledge themselves at each annual meeting." There was an immediate outlay of $150 to pay moving expenses. And in addition to the operating costs to which the Association was accustomed, now there would be house and office rent, office expenses,

and travel expenses. The Association was making a big leap, and it is no surprise that in subsequent years there would be frequent reminders to the churches that their contributions were needed.

Little information about Lambert's work is available. We know that at the time he was given the title of "Superintendent of Missions." He was the sole employee of the Association, and since the Association neither owned nor rented an office he worked from his home. There is no hint that the State Mission Board helped in any way other than giving financial support. If Lambert had been given a job description, we have no record of it. The committee appointed by the Executive Committee to work with him doubtless did so to the best of their ability, but they were all exploring new ground. The report given to the October, 1945, annual session of the Association stated that the committee "has had frequent conferences with Brother Lambert and has worked in harmony and cooperation with him in his work." And in speaking to the report, Lambert told about what he had been doing during the past ten months. Unfortunately, the records do not show what he said. The report of the Sunday School work, given by John L. Coley, contains what may be a hint of some discontent. The statement that Lambert "has lived up to all our expectations," is followed by the affirmation that "If he has failed in any way it is because, largely, [of] our failure to cooperate with him as we promised." At that session Lambert made the report on "State and Home Missions," but in it there is no reference to the work of the Association.

One significant development during Lambert's tenure was the organization of Forest Hills Baptist Church in August, 1945, the first new church in the Association in ten years. "Forest Hills" was a relatively new community on the western edge of Raleigh. The formation of the church was the result of the active interest of a number of residents of the area who were active in other churches. Lambert assisted them in making a survey of the area, in setting up their organization, in securing a place to meet, and in finding pastoral leadership. (See *The Possible Dream*, Jack Porter's history of Forest Hills Church, published in 2005.)

In the 1945 session of the Association, Lambert introduced Miss Annie Ivey "as the Superintendent of the newly organized Good Will Center in Raleigh. He stated that this was "the first Good Will Center in North Carolina." That Center was not the creation of the Association, but of a group of members of the Woman's Missionary Societies of six Raleigh Churches. The long-defunct "Raleigh Baptist Council" was



The original chapel of Forest Hills Baptist Church

revived to help support the project and to hold title to its property. Lambert's introduction of Ivey was not only the beginning of a difficult-to-understand relationship between the Center and the Association; it was also the first step in what came to be a major activity of the Association, direct action in dealing with serious social problems. When Ivey reported to the Association about her work after a year on the job, she said that "Winning souls and lifting life is the purpose of the Good Will Center. Its aim is to minister to all the needs of the people it serves, bettering home conditions, providing a wholesome environment for children, winning to Christ, and making the contact between the people and the churches."

Lambert spent only a short time with the Association. Was there discontent with his work? Or did he find that this kind of work was really not his calling? At any rate, after only one year on the job, he resigned to become pastor of Spray Baptist Church. At the January 3, 1946, meeting of the Executive Committee his resignation was accepted "with regrets."

At the same session that Lambert's resignation was presented, the Executive Committee appointed F. O. Mixon, C. O. Green, and W. M. Page as a search committee to find a successor. That committee came to the next meeting, on February 15, 1946, with the recommendation that D. M. Larkins be appointed. As the Executive Committee approved the recommendation, they expressed to Larkins the hope "that his services would continue for a reasonable length of time rather than be terminated after a brief period." (That expression, it might be noted, suggests that Lambert's departure had been due to his own dissatisfaction rather than any dissatisfaction on the part of the Association.) A native of Wilmington, N.C., Larkins received an A.B. from Wake Forest College in 1938 and a Th.M. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1942. He was pastor at Pilot Mountain Church in Surry County until 1944, leaving that church to become pastor at Knightdale, in the Raleigh Association. He was therefore known to many people in the Raleigh Association when he accepted the position in 1946. Indeed, only two years earlier, he had delivered the opening message in the annual session at which merger of the two associations had been finalized.

Larkins began his work with the Association in March, 1946, and he was well into the job when the Annual Meeting of the Association was held on October 31 and November 1, 1946. At that meeting he reported on Associational Missions "at this point," circulating a digest of the facts of the situation. Then "He then asked Dr. Mixon to present a suggested program of work for the Superintendent of Missions. Dr. Mixon read a suggested program, stating that it was included in the first issue of the Associational Bulletin." Mixon then explained why the churches were being asked to give more money to the Association (about twice that of the previous year): "The reason for the increase is to let the Association pay one third of the salary of the Superintendent, the State Convention pay one third, and the Home Mission Board one third. Up to now, he explained, the Association had only paid his expenses.... This increase is the first step toward the Superintendent being supported entirely by the Association, and being responsible only to the association."

Larkins' annual reports show that at first his chief responsibilities were to work with the churches in strengthening their educational programs—their Sunday Schools, Training Unions, Woman's Missionary Societies—and to assist in their evangelistic work. In time, however, he expanded his activities, and his report to the Association in the October,

1948, meeting included a significant innovation: "Worked with the survey committee of the Raleigh Baptist Council in an effort to survey 5 areas in our association with a view of establishing new Baptist churches."

The need for such a survey was becoming increasingly apparent, because the surge in the county's population growth was beginning. Most of the churches in the Association grew only a little, if at all, and did not keep pace with the incoming population. Resident membership and average Sunday school attendance in several randomly selected churches in the year that the two associations merged compared with membership and Sunday school attendance in the year that the survey was made are suggestive:

	Total Membership		Sunday School Average Attendance	
	1944	1948	1944	1948
Apex	287	539	125	181
Bethany	236	175	127	75
Cary	435	360	141	180
Garner	122	250	87	118
Green Level	290	392	134	160
Knightdale	339	390	113	159
New Hill	66	125	45	77
Raleigh, First	1378	1898	495	519
Stony Hill	215	150	45	50
Wake Cross Roads	309	245	112	100
Zebulon	400	421	153	202

By making the survey, the Association, therefore, was taking an important step in trying to deal with the question of how to reach the new people who were moving into the area.

Larkins did not remain with the Association long enough to follow up on any of the findings of that survey, however. The records give no hint of discontent on his part; they merely show that at their regular meeting on January 17, 1949, the Executive Committee "regretfully" accepted his resignation and appointed a committee "to frame suitable resolutions of commendation." He left to attend the School of Pastoral Care at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital. After finishing his studies

there, he served churches in Granville County until his retirement in the fall of 1981.

A New Way of Operating

On the same day that Larkins' resignation was accepted the Executive Committee asked the Missions Committee to begin a search for his successor. At the same time, some members felt the need for a re-evaluation of the Association's commitment to an associational missions program. On February 7 their Missions Committee asked that the churches be contacted about their wishes, and the Executive Committee voted to call a Spring session of the Association to discuss that matter. At that session, held on March 24, W. M. Page, chairman of the Missions Committee spoke of what had been done in the program, of what he considered to be the present needs, and then asked what the Association wished to do. After a general discussion, "The body was enthusiastic in its endorsements of the continuation of the program."

Apparently the Executive Committee had been confident of what the decision would be, for following the discussion they presented their candidate, Lee Pridgen. Pridgen's educational background was varied. He had attended Wake Forest College for one year, in 1925–26. He had transferred to the Baptist Bible Institute in New Orleans (which became "New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary" in 1946). After two years there he served for a time as Associate Pastor of North Charleston Baptist Church, and then as Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Orangeburg, SC. In 1940 he returned to Wake Forest College and was graduated in 1942. He was an army chaplain from 1942 until 1945, serving in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, receiving the Purple Heart for wounds suffered on Anzio beachhead. After he left the army he became Associational Missionary for the Tar River Baptist Association, with offices in Louisburg, NC, and it was from that position that he came to the Raleigh Baptist Association.

The Association voted "heartily and enthusiastically" to call Pridgen to the work, and assumed a significantly increased financial obligation to support him. Not only were operating expenses increased, but they also assumed the $1200 reduction which the State Missions Board had made in its appropriation.

Under Pridgen's leadership the Association was to begin to function in a new and radically different way. Before moving into that new era, therefore, we might make some general observations about the life of the Association in the 1940s. *First*, the Association was an integral part of a tightly-knit denominational organization. It was, of course, completely autonomous, with its own constitution, choosing its own officers, taking actions which it deemed advisable, and operating with its own budget. Yet it relied upon the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention for information, for literature, for help in programs, and (in the initial employment of an associational missionary) financial assistance. In addition, its programs were those of the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. Its calendar was coordinated with those groups and its special emphases were planned to be consistent with the denomination. It assumed that the educational and missionary programs of its member churches were like those of the broader denomination.

The *second* observation is directly related to the first: In its annual meetings the association gave a great deal of attention to reports on the programs both of the local churches and of the denomination. As a matter of fact, it is in those programs that much of the work of the churches was done. Every year, therefore, there were reports from the Sunday School, the Training Union, the Woman's Missionary Union. Usually there were reports on denominational missions and institutions, because through those agencies much of the work of the denomination was done. Such reports were both informational and promotional. Surprisingly, little was said about worship in the churches, and little about pastoral care.

Third, as was true of the denomination as a whole, the importance of the Woman's Missionary Union in the work of the Association cannot be over-stated. Most of the missionary education done in the churches was their work, and the strength of the financial support for missions was due largely to their efforts. Their annual reports to the Association reflected a constant effort to strengthen missionary activity. Yet the official relationship of the W.M.U. to the Association was ambivalent. In the structure of the Southern Baptist Convention the W.M.U. was not a denominational agency, but rather an independent organization "auxiliary to" the Convention. The constitution of the Raleigh Baptist

Association identified its officers as "a moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, treasurer, Training Union director, and Sunday School superintendent"—but did not include the President of the Woman's Missionary Union. In the *Minutes* for 1947 and 1948, however, she was listed as an Officer. Someone must have raised a question, for in 1949 and 1950 she had lost that position! As the constitution provided, however, she was consistently listed as a member of the Executive Committee.

The status of the Woman's Missionary Union leads into a *fourth* observation. The business of the Raleigh Baptist Association was conducted primarily by men, and for the most part the leaders were ministers. Each year, approximately half of the messengers to the annual session of the Association were women, but their participation in the proceedings was quite limited. The *Annual* of the 1949 session, for example, report only two women as speaking, Mrs. D. W. Merritt who read the report of the W.M.U., and Mrs. Foy J. Farmer who spoke to it. The participation in between sessions was likewise highly limited. Five of the six officers of the Association were always men, with the exception that in 1947 the Clerk was a woman. The other officer was the President of the W.M.U. The Executive Committee consisted of the six officers and nine other persons; in 1944, one of those other persons was a woman, and in 1945, two were women. In 1949, on the eight committees with a total of thirty members, only two women served. This status of women in the Association, of course, reflects the situation in the local churches, and indeed, in society as a whole.

Finally, new churches were a rarity in the Raleigh Baptist Association. Indeed, when Forest Hills was formed in 1945, it was the first since Calvary had been formed in 1935, and only the fourth since the end of World War I! With only a hint of the population growth that was soon to come, the people in the Raleigh Baptist Association who wanted to make plans for expansion were operating without precedent but with great foresight.

Raleigh Baptist Association *Ministries Today*

Volunteers loading boxes for the Hurricane Katrina food drive

Chapter Two

Expanding the Work 1950–1957

The whole world seemed to be in turmoil in 1950 and the years following. The Arab nations had never accepted the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, and for a decade there was armed conflict in that area. Growing in power, China was feared by both the Soviet Union and the United States. Terrorists were active in Kenya and in Cyprus and revolutions were under way in Argentina, Algeria, Hungary, Poland, and Cuba. Independence movements were gaining strength in the Republics of the Soviet Union. The African and Asian possessions of the European powers were seeking independence. Even Puerto Rico, a possession of the United States, gained commonwealth status in 1953.

The people of the United States were profoundly unsettled by a widening fear of Communism. Indeed, the early 1950s are often called "The McCarthy Era" because of the opportunistic scare tactics employed by the Senator from Wisconsin. Not only politicians but also educators, entertainers, news people, and religious leaders were the subject of his attacks as either Communists or "fellow travelers." Many states, including North Carolina, adopted speaker ban laws for their state colleges and universities, and many began to subject public employees to tests of their "loyalty." In 1952 the Supreme Court barred "subversives" from teaching in the public schools. And at the same time the nation was embroiled in war with North Korea (1950–1953).

The rising tide of protest against racial segregation and discrimination among the African-Americans was resulting in great social changes in the nation. Since World War II the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had been challenging the legality of

segregation in public transportation, in employment, in housing, and in state universities. In the early 1950s segregation in the public schools was challenged, and a Supreme Court decision in 1954 declared the practice to be unconstitutional. In that same period the various methods of preventing African-Americans from voting were eliminated, and blacks increasingly became involved in the political process. Under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was born and came to spearhead the non-violence resistance movement which challenged both law and custom which supported segregation.

In spite of all of these problems, both internal and international, there was much promise of good things to come—things which now seem commonplace. For the most part, the economy was healthy and there was an abundance of consumer products. The unemployment rate was low, and indeed the employment of women outside the home rose to its highest level in history in 1951. There were significant achievements in medicine, including the creation of the Salk polio vaccine in 1955 and the development of synthetic penicillin in 1959. The Interstate Highway system was constructed. Space exploration became a reality. Television entered the homes.

The upsurge of interest in religion which had characterized the years immediately following World War II continued throughout the 1950s, though at a somewhat slower pace. Between 1950 and 1959 membership in churches increased from 57 percent of the population to 63.6 percent. Much popular music and many successful movies had religious themes. Norman Vincent Peale's *Power of Positive Thinking*, published in 1952, became a best seller which is still in print, and Billy Graham's book, *Peace With God*, published in 1953, was one of its chief rivals. The phrase, "In God We Trust," first appeared on our currency in the 1950s, and by an act of Congress in 1954 "under God" was inserted into the Pledge of Allegiance. During that period many prominent political figures in Washington began to gather for prayer breakfasts, and President Eisenhower, who had made frequent religious references during his political campaign, was baptized in the White House. Billy Graham, who by this time was arguably the most popular religious figure in America, had ready access to the White House.

The urbanization of Wake County was already well under way in 1950. The population was more than 65,000, up from 45,800 in 1940,

and it continued to grow throughout the 1950s. The area included in the city limits had expanded by 66 percent. While Raleigh and its suburbs welcomed the lion's share of the new residents, the rest of Wake County also grew in population. Some new residents came from other areas of the state, but most came from other regions of the country. Most were young adults, and many had young children. For the most part, they settled in new residential areas which did not have the traditional institutional services—including churches. While some felt the need for church involvement, many did not. In either case, for the Raleigh Baptist Association they were "a field ripe unto harvest."

A New Plan

Nine months after Lee Pridgen began his work with the Association, on Friday morning, October 28, 1949, W. M. Page outlined his activities. He began by stating that it was the work of the Executive Secretary "to undergird and promote every phase of the work that we are doing in our Association," naming the kind of things that Lambert and Larkins had done. Then he said, "He assists churches in forming fields and in locating pastors. He promotes evangelism and Schools of Missions. Last but not least, he leads in discovering areas in our Association where new Baptist churches are needed and leads in the organization of such churches.

Pridgen followed Page by identifying the things that he thought needed to be done. Speaking of the rural churches, he commented on inadequate buildings, the need for resident pastors, and the need for improved teaching and training programs. Speaking of the city of Raleigh, he talked about the large unchurched population and named areas in which new churches could be established. To meet these needs, he said, increased financial support for the Association is necessary. He had not come unprepared for his work. Rather he had clearly-defined objectives and concrete ideas about how to achieve those objectives. High on his list was the establishment of new churches in the rapidly-growing areas of the Association. Doubtless his ideas had been discussed in his preliminary conversations with the Executive Committee. Their implementation necessarily entailed certain organizational changes which took place within months after

his arrival on the scene. The first step was a change of title which indicated a different kind of authority: in March, 1949, Pridgen had begun his work as "Superintendent of Missions," but in May he was identified as "Executive Secretary." The new title reflects a significant difference in the nature of the position. The work of both Lambert and Larkins had focused on assistance to the churches in strengthening their programs. Pridgen, however, while continuing the kind of work that his predecessors had done, was clearly expected to coordinate the work of the churches in reaching out to the broader community in a way that they had not done before.

The next step was prompted by the prospect of the Association owning property. Feeling the need to act quickly, on June 9, 1949, the Executive Committee authorized the Missions Committee "to take options on lots where needed for the development of new churches." The prospect of owning of property led them to request that the Association take the necessary steps to create the office of "Trustee" so that the Association "might be legally constituted with the authority to hold property." That action was taken at the annual meeting of the Association on Friday, October 28, 1949.

The third step was also taken on October 28, 1949. The messengers approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee recommendation that an expansion fund be established for the exclusive purpose of purchasing sites for new churches.

It would be difficult to overemphasize the significance of these three actions. In essence, they made the establishment of new churches a function of the Association rather than of individual churches. While they did not—and could not—prevent a local church from acting on its own or deter a group of concerned persons from beginning a church in any community, they did place upon the Association the responsibility for making systematic plans for organizing new churches and for eliciting from the older congregations the necessary support for those new groups.

When Pridgen reported to the Association at its annual session the next year (October 27, 1950), he summarized his perception of the challenge of establishing those new churches:

> On the basis of reports and surveys Baptists are distributed in this area as follows: In the city of Raleigh—9,500 who

> are members of the local churches and approximately 7,000 whose membership is elsewhere; in towns—4,300 churched and approximately 2,000 whose membership is elsewhere; in villages and open country—14,000 churched and approximately 2,500 whose membership is elsewhere. Figuring thusly, there are around 27,800 in the Association's 74 churches, with more than 11,000 others who reside in the bounds of the Association, but are not members with us. Herein is our challenge!

Accepting the idea that the Association should take the lead in establishing new churches required a bit of adjusting on the part of many people. Even as Pridgen and the Executive Committee began implementing the plan, it became apparent that some were having second thoughts. At the Executive Committee meeting on April 13, 1950, only six months after the decision was made, the policy was discussed. The minutes report, however, that "It was agreed that the present policy of organizing churches under the sponsorship of the Association rather than through individual churches be continued."

At the heart of the plan was the purchasing of property for the location of new churches in areas of population growth. At its October, 1949, annual session the Association had authorized the establishment of an expansion fund to finance such purchases, and at the October, 1950, session the Expansion Fund Treasurer reported that the fund had received $8,710.30. In addition, some help had come from the Baptist State Convention. Meanwhile, the Executive Committee had lost no time in beginning that task, and at almost every meeting for the next year there were reports on negotiations for property. Not all the possibilities materialized, of course, but during 1950 property was purchased in Longview Gardens, in the County Home area, in Carolina Pines, and on Oberlin Road. Within the year St. John's, Longview, Carolina Pines, and Emmanuel Churches had been organized, each with between 50 and 65 charter members. Within five years all had become strong congregations; in 1955 St. John's had 251 members, Longview had 353, Carolina Pines had 250, and Emmanuel had 388.

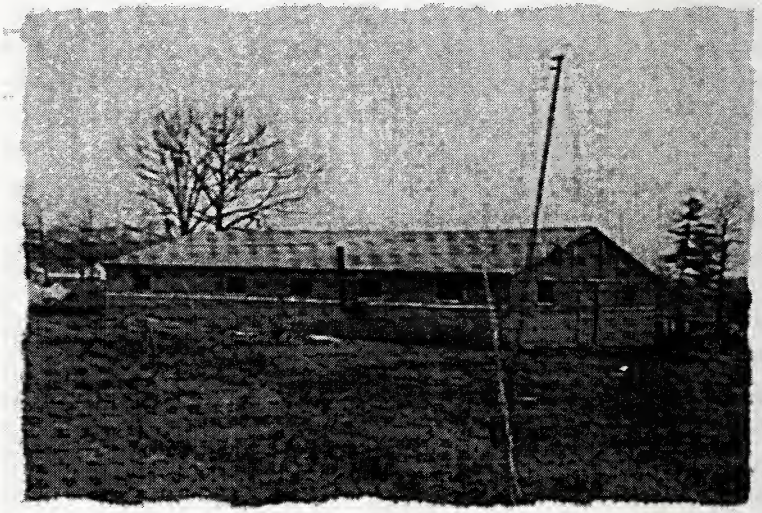
After two years of working the plan, Pridgen reported to the Association (October 30, 1952), that "We believe the organization and promotion of churches and missions is not for just a few individuals, but

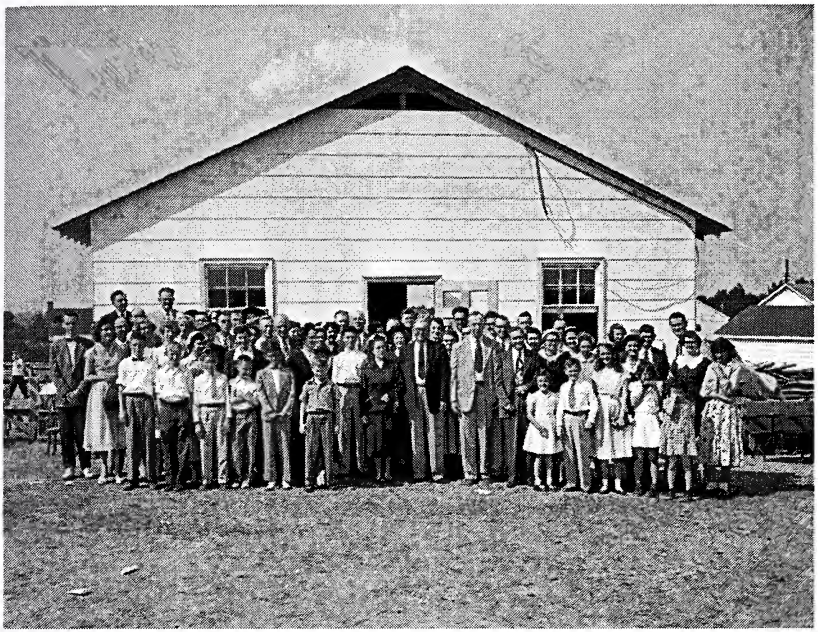
rather a task for our churches, all of them, and all the individuals in the churches.... It is all the churches cooperating through the Association in the 'mothering' of missions and new churches." Then he explained the procedure that had been followed:

> The field is studied by the Missions Committee along with the Executive Secretary. It is discussed in the Council. A site is acquired either through purchase or gift. Preliminary services are held in available building, tent, or erected 'hut.' Interest is studied during these services. If the Council decides to go ahead with the organization of a new church it so votes and plans for the organization are made. The Church is organized by special called Council. The new church is aided as much as possible in getting started by the Council. All expenses in this procedure is borne by the Expansion Fund. The Expansion Fund comes from the churches.

Pridgen went on to report that "We have entered every field scheduled except Western Boulevard. That is now before the Council. Ridge Road development is now to receive attention!"

Emmanual Baptist Church original meeting place

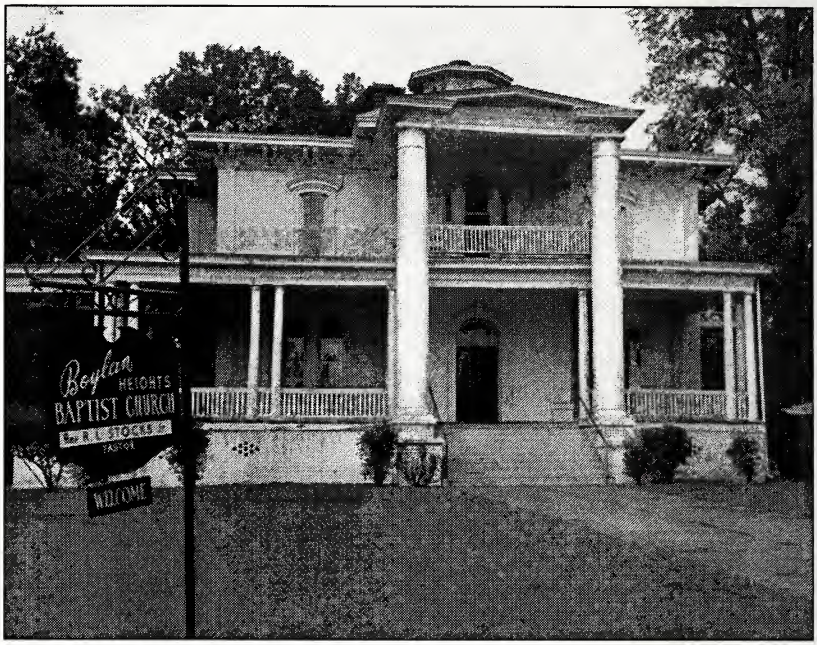




Highland Baptist Church, 1954

In the next four years seven more churches were organized in new residential developments or in older areas that were growing: Wakeminster in 1951; Neuse in 1952, Athens Drive and Hillcrest in 1953; Wilders Grove, Ridge Road, and Highland in 1954; and Trinity in 1956. All were begun with fifty or more charter members, and all grew significantly. In addition, the Executive Secretary and the Executive Committee were constantly watching other areas of development. They explored options and dismissed some but made plans for others and worked to bring those plans to fruition. They were in constant touch with the pastors and lay leaders of the Association, and when a decision was made about proceeding with the establishing of a new church it represented the collective wisdom of a large number of people.

Another church had been organized in 1952, but without help from the Association. A delegation from the Boylan Heights area of Raleigh approached the Executive Council at their meeting on June 13 about their interest in beginning a church there. The matter was referred to the Missions Committee, and the delegation was asked to return to the next Council meeting with more facts. At that next meeting, upon the



Boylan Heights Baptist Church

recommendation of the Missions Committee, the Council voted "not to sponsor the organization of a church in the Boylan Heights area at this time." The group proceeded without help from the Association, however, and was formally organized on August 3, 1952. The next day they voted to seek membership in the Association, saying that they believed that the church "has been established within God's keeping, we wish to become a member of the Association." At the October 28 meeting of the council it was announced that that group had organized "without our assistance," and that they had encountered some problems and needed help. The Council asked the Missions Committee to do what it could. At the annual session of the Association on Friday, October 31, a recommendation of the missions committee that Boylan Heights be accepted as a member was approved.

Concerned about the Boylan Heights situation, the Missions Committee (which had the responsibility of recommending churches for acceptance into the Association) concluded that the Association

needed a more careful procedure for accepting new member churches. Consequently they recommended to the Association in 1952 "That all churches applying for membership in the Association be received under watchcare of the Association for one year and then into full membership." Their recommendation had a precedent in the way Union View Church, of Franklinton, had been accepted. In 1949 that church had been received "under watchcare" because the Committee on Membership had not had sufficient time "to get all facts concerning this church." Watchcare for that church was continued until 1951, when it was received into full fellowship. The Missions Committee's 1952 proposal was rejected at the time, but concern persisted. The next year, therefore, the Association approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee that the Constitution be amended to require a watchcare period of at least one year so that the church making application could "prove, through practice and attitude, its place as a cooperating Baptist Church."

Once the new plan for establishing new churches was under way, it became apparent that a re-organization of the administration of the work of the Association was needed. In 1950, according to the Constitution, the Association was composed of "pastors and messengers chosen by the local churches." Three hundred and nine messengers were registered, of whom approximately one-half were women and one-fourth were pastors. Fifteen of the thirty persons who served on the eight committees were pastors, and five of the committee members were women. The Association was led by the Executive Secretary and a fifteen-member Executive Committee composed of four pastors and eleven laymen. No woman had ever served on the Executive Committee. The paucity of women in the committee structure is understandable because of the traditional understanding of the place of women in society as a whole. It is more difficult to understand, however, why laymen did not play as great a role in the work of the other committees as they did in the Executive Committee.

At any rate, the Executive Committee was quite busy with conducting the work of the Association in between the annual sessions. Concerned that steps be taken to involve more people in the making of decisions and implementing them, they initiated a major organizational change. On October 26, 1951, the Association approved their recommendation that the Executive Committee be replaced by an Executive Council comprised of all pastors in the Association and one lay member

from each church. While that step did not result in every church having lay representatives on the Council, in 1952 fifty of the Association's seventy-six churches did. And of those fifty, six were women. Four standing committees of the Council were named: Executive, Program, Finance, and Missions. The plan called for the Council to meet once a quarter, and for each committee to arrange for its own meetings.

An Added Emphasis

Associated with the reorganization in 1951 was the creation of a new standing committee which with the passing of time was to become increasingly important in the work of the Association. Until the early 1950s all of the standing committees had been directly related to the traditional organized local church and/or denominational programs. But in its report to the Fall, 1950, session of the Association, the Committee on Resolutions proposed the creation of "a permanent committee on Social Service." The proposal was not without precedent, for, while local churches normally did not have such committees, both the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention did. The matter was referred to the Executive Committee for action. The executive committee moved quickly, and at its January 29, 1951, meeting elected a committee composed of W. M. Page, E. M. Poteat, J. G. Blackburn, Robert L. Newton and Ross Cadle." No specific directions were given the committee, but presumably they were not authorized to speak *for* the Association, but rather to speak *to* it.

We have no clue as to who was behind the idea of establishing the Social Service Committee, but all of the persons named to serve initially were on the Executive Committee, and all five were known for their concern for the current issues with which the new committee was expected to deal. Their first report, presented at the Fall, 1951, session of the Association, spoke to five matters, all of which were to demand frequent attention in the years to come. First, they spoke about gambling, deploring "the action of our recent legislature in legalizing gambling in some of our Eastern counties." Second, they discussed the historic importance of religious liberty and urged opposition to the availability of public funds "to private and religious institutions." Third, they cited the Christian emphasis on peace, spoke of its pertinence to current international relations,

and urged the "speedy and enthusiastic ratification" of the recent Japanese Peace Treaty. Fourth they celebrated the increasingly "healthy attitude toward interracial understanding and good will." Citing the recent opening of three Southern Baptist Seminaries and a number of Baptist colleges to the admission of Negroes, they urged upon the churches, and all Christian people, "a general acceptance of the Biblical teaching of brotherhood and the inconsistency of race prejudice or the restriction of human rights." Finally, they talked of the growing problem of the use of alcohol and urged the churches "to teach, preach and promote total abstinence among their members" and to work "to outlaw and eradicate the nefarious liquor traffic."

The Social Service Committee never had a monopoly on dealing with social problems. In the annual sessions of the Association many social issues were addressed in a variety of ways. The regular reports on the Orphanages (as they were called at that time), the Home for the Aged, and the Baptist Hospital are evidence of concern with the problems of society. In addition, however, current problems were often referred to or discussed in addresses and in motions brought from the floor. At the Fall, 1951, session, for example, the Association adopted a resolution protesting the proposed appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican. The next month the Executive Council appointed a committee to work with Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State to bring a noted speaker to Raleigh for a "rally in opposition to the Vatican appointment." In the Fall of 1952 the Association heard a report from the Raleigh Baptist Good Will Center. And at the annual session in the Fall of 1954, for the first time (but not the last) there was a report on the work of the Allied Church League, an inter-denominational group dedicated to "temperance education"—by which in reality was meant "total abstinence from the use of alcoholic beverages."

No other problem, however, seemed more urgent than that of race relations. That urgency reached a climax on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court handed down its land-mark decision that in the public schools segregation on the basis of race was unconstitutional. In June the Southern Baptist Convention approved a resolution which recognized the decision as "in harmony with the constitutional guarantee of equal freedom to all citizens, and with the Christian principles of equal justice and love for all men." In its report to the Association at its annual session in October the Social Service Committee cited with approval

the Convention's resolution and at the same time called on the Supreme Court "to recognize the principle of gradualism" in enforcing that decision. They concluded their statement on race by calling upon "our Baptist people to prayerfully seek the wisdom of God and the spirit of Christ in this educational and religious crisis."

The most forthright message delivered to the Association was made by E. McNeill Poteat in an address delivered on Friday afternoon, October 29, 1954. Feelings were running high in Wake County, as in the rest of the South, and the situation was tense. Speaking on "Looking Forward in Race Relations," Poteat addressed from a Christian perspective the strong emotions that were being felt and expressed by many people. According to the *Annual*, he concluded:

> The Christian formula is clear: Love others. Desire to achieve for them what you actually know is good for them. Emotions must be made over. As we cannot go back to slave trade or slavery, neither can we go back to segregated Schools. We have to accept the abolition of racial discrimination as we have accepted the abolition of slave trade and slavery. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28)

So quickly were things changing in the social arena, particularly in the area of race, that many people felt the need for a way of speaking in between the annual sessions of the Association. At the annual session in October, 1955, therefore, the Association approved the recommendation of the Executive Council that the Social Service Committee be a committee of the *Council* rather than of the *Association*, and that it be charged specifically with concern for "Institutional Work, Home Life, Industrial Life, Race Relations, Beverage Alcohol, Religious Liberty, Christian Citizenship, International Relations." The Council had recommended that the Committee "be given the right to speak and to act in these areas with quarterly reports submitted to the Council." The Association was not prepared to give that much leeway to the Committee, and instead authorized it "to speak before the North Carolina Legislature on the matter of prohibition as it relates to beverage alcohol," but insisted that before speaking on other issues they must secure the approval of the Association or the Executive Council."

The Association and the Denomination

No stranger to controversy, at times the Association took stands on issues which were troubling to the denomination. When the North Carolina Baptist Hospital sought and received funds from the Federal government, on January 9, 1950; the Executive Committee "voiced its objection" to the action as a violation of the Baptist belief in the separation of church and state. When in 1951 President Truman (a Baptist) was considering the possibility of establishing U. S. diplomatic relations with the Vatican, the Association adopted a resolution of protest. In its original form the motion spoke of the Association's "dismay" at the prospect. It was amended by the substitution of the word "regret," and then passed.

In the fall of 1953 the Association passed a resolution that dealt with a stormy issue within the Baptist State Convention. The state Director of the Baptist Student Union had been forced by the Convention's General Secretary to rescind his invitation to a controversial theologian to address the annual Fall convention of the Student Union. The Director and the B.S.U. secretaries at several institutions were under fire, and ultimately were dismissed. Throughout the state there were strong feelings about what was happening. The Raleigh Association went on record by passing the resolution that they had "absolute confidence in those who make up the personnel of our organized work of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina." The statement was ambivalent, of course, because it could have been applied to the parties on both sides of the controversy.

At the Fall, 1955, annual session the involvement of the Baptist State Convention in the property dispute between the splitting factions in the North Rocky Mount Baptist Church was debated, and a resolution was finally passed that came down on both sides—both affirming the autonomy of the local church and expressing confidence in the denominational leaders!

Expansion

In the October, 1954, annual session, acting on a recommendation from the Executive Council, the Association made two major decisions about its work. Both were necessitated by the rapidly expanding

work of the Association. The first was the simple acknowledgement that the Executive Secretary, who had been working out of his home, needed appropriate office space. That was handled easily by renting space from the Raleigh Building and Loan Association. Three years later, in the Fall of 1956, asked to vacate that space, they rented space in the newly completed Baptist State Convention building on Hillsborough Street.

The second decision, to employ a second staff person, had a more complicated history. In the background is the evolving character of the work of the Executive Secretary. In reporting on his work in 1947, Pridgen's predecessor, Dennis Larkins, had talked exclusively about his work in and with the churches. While working on the establishment of new churches occupied the lion's share of Pridgen's time, those other responsibilities were his as well. In his first report to the Association in its Fall, 1949, meeting, he had spoken to the needs of the older churches, and in particular their need for resident pastors. As time passed, he discovered that the pastors needed a pastor, that many churches needed outside help in dealing with internal conflict, that many needed programmatic help from the Association, that many needed "a shot in the arm." Recognizing that the work was too much for one person, the Association approved in the fall of 1955 the Executive Committee's recommendation that an Assistant be employed. On February 27, 1956, Pridgen's title was changed from "Executive Secretary" to "Secretary of Missions," and Frances Cooke was employed as "Assistant to the Secretary of Missions."

The Constitution adopted at the time of the merger of the associations in 1944 had been amended a number of times as the life and work of the Association evolved. Many people began to think that the time for a complete revision had come. Consequently, a committee was appointed to take on that task. They worked rapidly and their proposed new Constitution was presented and adopted by the Association on Friday, October 28, 1955. While the work was more precise and detailed, there was only one major change. The original constitution had stated the requirements for a church joining the Association, but it had said nothing about the Association withdrawing fellowship from a church. In the new Constitution, Article III (Membership), Section C, states that "The association shall have full right to withdraw fellowship from any church whose course of conduct is uncooperative."

Lee Pridgen's health was not good, and the work with the Association was becoming increasingly demanding. In the summer of

1957, therefore, he submitted his resignation, to be effective August 1. He had accepted the invitation of the smaller Mount Zion Association, also in North Carolina, to become their Secretary of Missions. After some years there, he moved on to the Sandhills Association. He retired in 1968 and moved to Daytona Beach, Florida. In his retirement he served as Associate Minister of the Seabreeze United Church until his death in 1971.

As a token of appreciation for Pridgen's work, the Association dedicated its *1957 Annual* to him and passed a statement of appreciation: "Resolved, that the association express its genuine and lasting appreciation to Rev. Lee Pridgen, who for eight years brought constructive and progressive leadership to our association as Associational Missionary and whose presence at this association we keenly miss."

Because Pridgen had played such a major role in the rapid expansion of the Association, it seems appropriate to make a summary statement about that expansion. There were seventy churches in the Association in 1949, and eighty-two in 1956. Thirteen churches had been established during his tenure, and most of them grew significantly:

Church	Established	Members after one year	Members in 1956
St. John's	1950	54	291
Longview	1950	65	433
Carolina Pines	1950	62	321
Emmanuel	1950	102	488
Wakeminster	1951	52	103
Boylan Heights	1952	65	201
Neuse	1952	?	99
Boulevard	1953	107	144
Wilder's Grove	1953	75	122
Ridge Road	1954	124	191
Highland	1954	124	178
Trinity	1956	149	107

Earlier we looked at the total membership and the average Sunday School attendance in eleven older churches (selected randomly) 1944 and 1948. The Sunday School attendance is the best statistical indication of active participation in church life. Now we add the figures for

1956 (for consistency, I have noted the *total* membership rather than *resident* membership, for not all churches report the breakdown):

	Membership			Sunday School Average Attendance		
	1944	**1948**	**1956**	**1944**	**1948**	**1956**
Apex	287	539	586	125	181	305
Bethany	236	175	326	127	75	130
Cary	435	360	762	141	180	417
Garner	122	250	430	87	118	235
Green Level	290	392	378	134	160	183
Knightdale	339	390	529	113	159	327
New Hill	66	125	123	45	77	93
Raleigh, First	1378	1898	1852	495	519	723
Stony Hill	215	150	396	45	50	160
Wake Cross Roads	309	245	484	112	100	335
Zebulon	400	421	652	153	202	330

These figures show that both in membership and in average attendance at Sunday school nearly all of the churches experienced significant growth. That growth was Association-wide. In 1944 the total membership in the Association's sixty-eight churches was 23,694. In 1949 the membership in the sixty-nine churches was 26,030. In 1956 the total membership in the eighty-two churches was 32,619.

Chapter Three

Cultivating the Fellowship (1958–1970)

To those who experience it, rapid change always seems like turmoil and confusion. That is what happened in the decade and a half between 1956 and 1970. Internationally, there were "wars and rumors of wars," with Fidel Castro rising to power in Cuba, the Communists building a wall to seal off East Berlin from the West, China attacking India, Israel defeating the Arab states in the Six Days War, and civil war in Northern Ireland. Even as they talked peace, the United States and the Soviet Union spied upon each other. They came perilously close to actual war when the Soviet Union began to build military bases in Cuba. America's first combat troops were sent to Vietnam in 1965 in a war over which the nation was deeply divided and which was to drag on for years.

At the same time protests by African-Americans against segregation and discrimination in this country were accelerating. The Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 launched a non-violent protest movement, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that swept the nation. The reaction to that movement, however, was often tragically violent. Other protest movements not committed to non-violence came into being. Racial riots on the part of unorganized mobs broke out in a number of cities. The nation was shocked by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy. Yet, through that movement, through legislation, and through court action, public schools were desegregated, segregation in public facilities was disallowed, employment patterns were changed, and participation in the political process was opened to minority groups.

How were Raleigh and Wake County affected by the protest movement in this era? Before 1960 there was little open conflict between blacks and whites in the area. That does not necessarily mean that the situation was good, however. As in other places in the South, there was significant opposition on the part of white people to all change in the traditional pattern of segregation and significant support in the part of African-Americans. Black activist groups, such as the Raleigh Citizens Association and the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, worked to increase the involvement of African-Americans in the political process. And whites, long in control of the political process, tried to use it to minimize change. But many leaders, both black and white, worked hard to prevent the violence that was plaguing many other cities. The result was that tension was high, change was slow, and there was little violence.

What happened in the churches? There were "kneel-ins" in which students, notably from Shaw University sought admission to white churches. Some white churches admitted them courteously, if not warmly. Some turned them away. Most, which were never approached by blacks, held lengthy discussions about what to do in the event that blacks did show up. Eventually a significant number of churches of most denominations, including Baptists, did position themselves as open to all people. And eventually there was no significant change in the ethnic make-up of most churches.

Patterns of religious life were also changing in this era. The post-World War II revival crested in the late 1950s. Church leaders were concerned that, while the number of people involved in institutional religion continued to climb, it did so at a slower rate. The growing popularity of many television evangelists did not translate into significant growth for the churches. By the late 1960s most major denominations actually began to shrink in size. Only Southern Baptists were still growing, and their rate of growth had slowed significantly. As we shall see, the area served by the Raleigh Baptist Association was affected by this nation-wide trend.

The era was one of theological ferment. This was the era of "secular theology," the "Death of God" theology, "black theology," "liberation theology," "feminist theology." It was also the era of the resurgence of a conservative evangelicalism most evident in the growth of neo-Pentecostalism and in the growth of such para-church groups as the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship. Many of the traditional denominations,

including the Baptists, found themselves unsure about the implications of the charismatic movement.

At the same time there was a growing concern for some kind of Christian unity. A number of denominational mergers took place, some of them bringing together groups with differing theological traditions and differing types of church organization. A number of denominations became involved in the Consultation on Church Union. At the same time several churches began work on a Common Lectionary. Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council (popularly called "Vatican II"), the first ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church since the 16th century. One result of that Council was a greater degree of openness to Protestant and Orthodox Christians.

Population-wise, Wake County continued to grow. State Government, which had grown significantly between 1940 and 1950, doubling the number of employees, grew by approximately another twenty-five percent by 1960. In 1958 Governor Luther Hodges announced plans for the

Hayes Barton Baptist Church

Research Triangle Park, and as the new facilities brought new families into the area, more than two-thirds of them chose to live in Wake County. In 1960 the bulk of Wake County's population lived inside the Beltline. By 1970 Raleigh's population topped 100,000, and new housing developments were being constructed to accommodate the growth—mainly to the north and west of the city. "North Raleigh" would soon be home to more people than "Old Raleigh"!

While Raleigh was growing, most of the neighboring towns—Apex, Fuquay Springs (and Varina), Garner, Holly Springs, Rolesville, and Wake Forest—maintained stable populations. Only Cary was beginning to grow in the early post-War years, as it became a "bedroom community" for Raleigh. Thomas M. Byrd says about Cary's growth, "Admittedly, taxes were high, the address was not as prestigious as that of 'north' Raleigh, and there was not a swimming pool in town. But the school was above average, churches were strong, houses were economical, and people were friendly and law-abiding." He adds that "Most newcomers were white and few were poor. Many worked for the State, meaning they usually had steady employment, if not big salaries. Thus, by the end of the 1950s, Cary was mainly a homogeneous, middle class, bedroom community of the Capital City." (*Around and About Cary*, p. 95). The population growth of Wake County in the early 1950s, therefore, was essentially the growth of Raleigh and Cary.

Growth in population, with people coming from all over the nation, was accompanied by social and cultural changes. Religious diversity became more pronounced. The Roman Catholic Church grew significantly, Protestant groups that historically had not been strong in the South did the same, the Jewish community grew, and people who claimed no religious affiliation increased in numbers. The "Blue Laws" which restricted commercial activity on Sundays, including sports, vanished fairly rapidly. To its radio station WRAL, Capital Broadcasting Company added WRAL-FM in 1946. The Democratic Party began to lose its long-standing political dominance of the state. In the ten years following World War II, the Raleigh Baptist Association had taken giant steps to adjust to the new cultural and religious situation and meet the spiritual needs of the people pouring into the area. Could they keep up with the continuing rapid change?

A Different Philosophy

To help them rise to the challenge of the new situation, the Association called upon one whom many of the people already knew because he had been a pastor in the Association. Robert L. (Bob) Costner was a native of Greensboro. He attended Mars Hill Junior College for two years and completed his college work at Wake Forest College, receiving the A.B. in 1939. He went on to study at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, receiving his Th.M. in 1942. During his student days at Southern he was pastor of a small church, and after finishing his studies he became a chaplain in the army. He served with the 101st Airborne Division in England, France, Holland, and Germany. When he was discharged from the service, he became pastor at Knightdale Baptist Church, in Wake County, beginning his work there in March, 1946. After three years there he was called to Westwood Church in Durham, where he was serving when he was asked to become Director of Missions for the Raleigh Association. He began his work with the 81-church Association on January 1, 1958.

While Costner took up the projects that Pridgen left, he had his own vision of what was his task. While the records never report his saying so at any time, it became apparent as time passed that his priority was the strengthening and broadening of the work of the churches. In his first report to the Association, presented on Friday, October 31, 1958, he spoke of the future as he saw it. He made seven suggestions, all emphasizing the local churches. He said that the Association does not exist "to coerce cooperation" but to "help participating churches" do what God has called them to do. The association exists to serve the autonomous churches, he said; its objective "is to cultivate closer bonds of sympathy and fellowship among all of our churches." At the next annual session he spoke of the need for new missions because of the rapid population growth in the area, but he did so within the context of his message on the necessity of cooperation between the churches.

It was to that task, therefore, that Costner devoted most of his energies. In each annual report he stressed the importance of the work done in the churches through their various organizations, and his presence in the churches is evident. In 1964, for example, as he spoke to the Association's theme for the coming year, "The Church Fulfilling its Mission through Worship," he said, "The resources of your associational leaders and officers will be directed toward an encouragement and guidance in the art

of worship." In light of that emphasis, he outlined the three-fold purpose of the association as

> (1) the cultivation of closer bonds of fellowship, sympathy, mutual understanding and brotherly love; (2) the counseling together in plans and programs for the strengthening and enlargement of God's Kingdom; and (3) the promotion of evangelism, Missions, Education, Social Service and Benevolence through Associational, State Convention and Southern Convention Programs.

He went on to speak of the need to strengthen the ties of pastor and people and to strengthen the ties between the churches. Such work is not spectacular, and one's success or failure in attempting it is impossible to measure. Yet in the long run it seems to have been the most important work that Costner did.

As to the establishment of new churches, Costner had a different philosophy from his predecessor. Pridgen had led the Association to establish new churches. Costner believed that the establishing of new congregations was a function of the churches. He enunciated that view plainly in his annual message to the Association in 1961, saying that "It is not the church that helps the missionary and missions committee start missions, but actually the missionary and missions committee should be there to help the church." He did believe that the Association should help the churches assess the need and provide financial assistance as needed. But the churches, rather than the Association, should take the lead. That kind of emphasis continued throughout his career with the Association.

New Churches

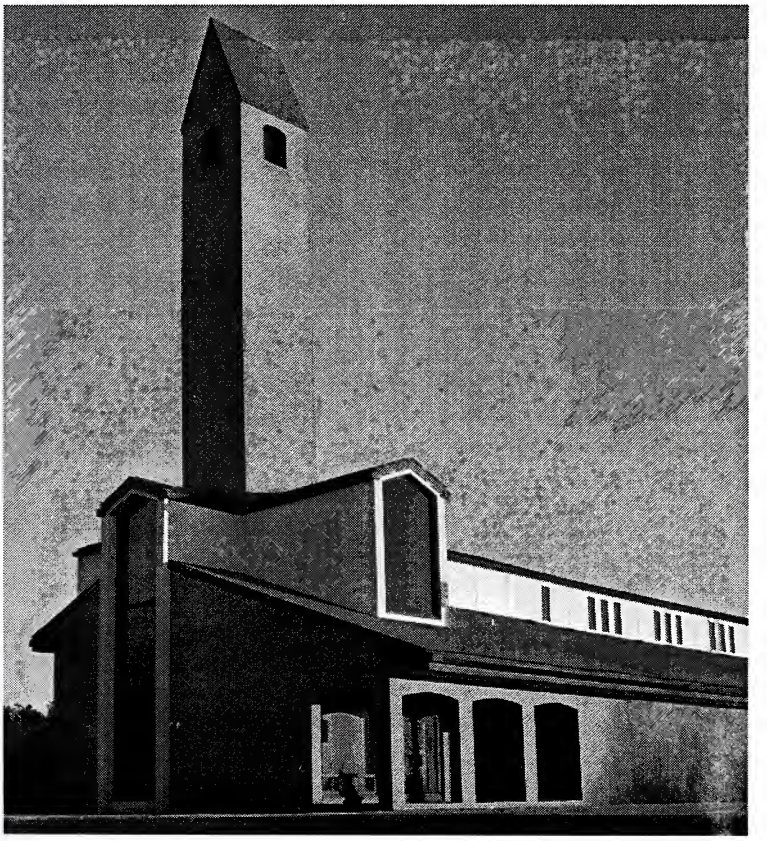
Both the Missions Committee and the Executive Council kept before the Association the concern for the establishment of new churches. They continued to survey the growing areas of the county and to offer assistance in organizing missions and churches. During Costner's first six years, five new churches were established: Fellowship Church was organized in the Old Stage Road area in 1958. Three years later, in 1961, Turner Memorial was organized in the Garner-New Bethel area. In the northern part of the county, Ridgecrest was organized in 1962. In

1963 Greenwood Forest was organized in Cary, and in the same year Macedonia was established between Raleigh and Holly Springs.

Between 1963 and 1970, however, only one other new church was established. The Missions Committee reported to the annual Session on Friday, October 27, 1967:

> During the year 1966–67 the Missions Committee received no requests for financial assistance to new churches in our Association. There were no requests for assistance in organizing new churches although one new church came into being

Greenwood Forest Baptist Church



> in the northeast Cary area coming out of the Reedy Creek section. This church is being considered by the Membership Committee, and both Committees stand ready to give any assistance they may be capable of rendering.

At the same time the Missions Committee spoke of areas in which the Association owned lots and of other rapidly-growing areas, and indicated that they had contacted churches near those areas to consider organizing missions. They continued to ask groups of churches to work together in studying areas with an eye to beginning a new congregation. And in 1968 they recommended to the Association in its fall session that "our Secretary of Missions be authorized to employ extra help on a temporary basis from time to time as the situation may demand, either Seminary Students or others, to go into needy areas and conduct surveys and assist in the organization of a new church in such areas if the survey should so indicate." The reason given for this recommendation was that neither pastors nor the staff of the Association had enough time to do that work.

Overall, the figures show a striking contrast: fourteen churches had been established in the 1950s, and five in the 1960s. Even in the '50s the establishment of new churches and the rate of growth of membership in Baptist churches had not kept up with the rate of population growth in the county. But in the '60s the gap widened. Why was that the case? One reason is that Wake County reflected the religious change that was taking place across the nation. The polls show that nationwide in the '60s the percentage of the population participating in religious activities declined. In addition, among the people who did participate in religious activities, a growing number were drawn to new, non-traditional movements, including independent churches, para-church Christian movements, and new non-Christian religions.

A second factor, which cannot be quantified, was probably involved: There was significant social unrest, and radical change took place in America during the '60s. That was the time of the hippie generation, when many young people challenged traditional moral standards and turned to drugs, mysticism, communal living, psychedelic arts. The rising challenge to racial segregation, about which we shall say more later, was always in the news. There was a constant threat of war with the Soviet Union, and a gradual involvement that took us into a highly controversial

war in Vietnam. While such unrest offered a great opportunity to religion, it made difficult the marshaling of resources to meet the challenge.

A third factor was the lack of adequate financial support for the Association. From the beginning of the expansion program in 1949, the Association had helped purchase land on which new churches could be built, and after missions or churches had been established had helped finance the program until the congregation was strong enough to be self-supporting. That policy, of course, required a significant increase in contributions from the churches. For a time that increase happened: the total associational budget grew every year, from $6,640 in 1950 to $15,195 in 1954, and every year the budget was met. (During those years there was some financial assistance from the Baptist State Convention, decreasing each year until it ended in 1955.) From 1955 onward the budget continued to increase every year, but contributions never matched the budget. The 1955 budget called for $19,937, and contributions amounted to only $15,612. The 1970 budget called for $36,613, and income was only $28,683. From time to time the Missions Committee called attention to the impact of the budgetary problem upon their work. In their report at the annual session on October 30, 1959, they said that they had been limited by "the lack of funds for starting new work." The next year they said that they would continue to study new areas for the possible location of churches and missions. But, they said, "we dare not obligate ourselves for new sites beyond the ability of our finances. With adequate support from all of our churches it would be possible for us to start at least two new missions or churches each year for the next five years."

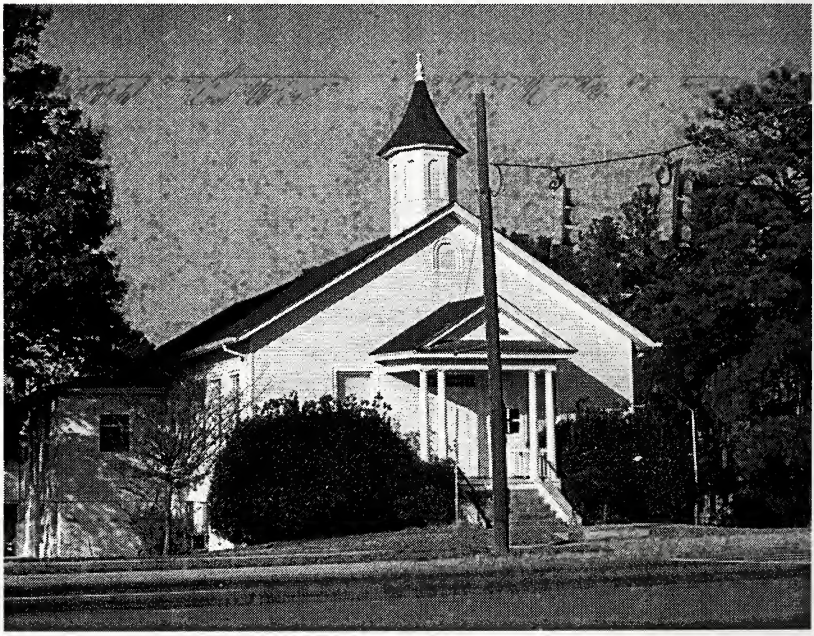
In his written message to the annual session in 1962 Costner noted that "All of our churches, institutions and agencies face dire financial needs at the present and for the future." In their report that same year the Missions Committee urged "a greater financial support from all of our churches this next year." The problem persisted throughout the decade. In their report in 1968 the Missions Committee said that they found themselves staggered by the needs. They felt "hampered by lack of funds and personnel." Their report at the next annual session (October 23–24, 1969) was even more discouraging. Chairman William T. Mills said:

> Your Missions Committee is not pleased that it must bring such a sterile report this year, but to be honest we must. We are all aware of the tremendous growth of Raleigh and Wake

County over the past two years. We are aware also that only six new churches have come into being during the last twelve years, and to our knowledge only one of these was a sponsored mission. We have two lots that can be used as church sites or traded, but they are over-grown with weeds. We need more funds, better plans or revised organization; possibly some of each, and so would welcome any suggestions that might be forthcoming in a constructive and positive manner.

There have been no requests from any churches for help. Individual feelers have been extended, however, from the Quail Hollow section and from the Brookhaven area; and it has been the feeling of your chairman that if these people could get a Sunday School started, and then a church, that our committee would be glad to recommend what ever financial aid we could to help them in such an effort.

Millbrook Baptist Church



One established and growing congregation withdrew from the Association in the early 1960s. With significant help from the Association in acquiring its property, Neuse Baptist Church had been organized in 1952. For several years the Association had contributed to the salary of the pastor. The *Annual* does not indicate when they were accepted into membership in the Association, but from 1952 through 1960 they sent an annual report to the Association. At the January 14, 1963, meeting of the Council, however,

> Attention was called to the fact that the Neuse Baptist Church has not been a cooperating church during the past two years since the present pastor was called to the church. After appropriate discussion motion was passed that the Membership Committee direct letters to their Pastor, Sunday School Superintendent, Clerk and any other leaders or officials of the Neuse Church seeking an opportunity to meet with them in business session for the purpose of encouraging them to resume a cooperative relationship with the Association and with the State and Southern Conventions.

The effort to bring the church back into the fold failed, and on October 14, 1963, the Council approved the recommendation of the Membership Committee that fellowship be withdrawn from the Neuse Church "because of uncooperative conduct." In their report to the entire Association at the session on October 25, 1963, the Committee said:

> There has been no report by this church to the association since 1960 and no support of association work. During this period several letters have been sent to the Church Clerk in regard to the church's desire to remain in the fellowship of the Raleigh Association, or to withdraw. The Neuse Church has made no reply to any of this correspondence. The pastor of the church has been contacted, personally, by a member of the committee, and he has expressed their desire to withdraw fellowship from the Association.

Changes in Organization

The organizational structure of the Raleigh Baptist Association had remained essentially unchanged between 1958 through 1970. Within that overall framework, however, there were some significant organizational developments just about the time Costner became Secretary of Missions. The Association's Department of Church Music had been organized May 7, 1956, and made its first report at the Associational meeting in the fall of 1956. Frances Cooke had begun her work as "Assistant to the Secretary of Missions" on February 27, 1956. It was she who carried the burden of organizing and overseeing the move of the Association offices to the Baptist Building on Hillsborough Street in Raleigh the following November. And it was she who carried the responsibility of the day-by-day work of the Association from the time of Pridgen's departure on August 1, 1957, until Costner began his work on January 1, 1958. In that same year audio-visual aids report became a regular part of the program of the annual session of the Association.

Another change gets a bit more attention in the official records. For many years the Association had had a Committee on Ordination, whose function was to examine candidates for ordination when requested to do so by a member church. True to its insistence on the autonomy of the local church, the Association had never required that the churches turn to that committee for the examination of ministerial candidates. Yet the churches had consistently done so. With the growing number of churches in the area, and with Southeastern Seminary located within its territory, the requests became increasingly frequent. Chaired by Jack Bullard, the Committee therefore formulated and presented to the 1964 annual meeting of the Association a statement of "Policy and Procedure" by which the Committee proposed to work. The use of that document was expected to give a greater consistency to the ordination process. The proposal began with a statement about the relationship of the churches to one another as it affected ordination:

> Ordination into the Baptist ministry concerns both the church which ordains and her sister churches because a candidate ordained by one church will presumably serve other churches and enjoy the public recognition afforded Baptist ministers. It

> is to be clearly understood, however, that the ordaining church is only seeking the advice and counsel of her sister churches through the Committee on Ordination and that the ordaining church retains sole authority in determining whether a candidate is to be ordained. The committee's function is to make a recommendation to the ordaining church.

The document then stated that the committee would examine only candidates who had already received a call to a specific work, that the requesting church should not schedule an ordination service until after it had received the committee's recommendation, and that the committee would assume that the requesting church had already assured it self of the good character of the candidate. Each candidate would be required to submit in a writing a brief autobiographical statement and a personal statement about his religious experiences and his doctrinal views. The oral examination would deal primarily with the matters discussed in that paper.

A bit more subtle change, but important nevertheless, was a sort of "tightening up" of the relationship of the churches with the Association. In his report to the Association in the Fall of 1960, Costner "strongly urged everyone charged with the responsibility of scheduling local church programs to examine carefully the Associational calendar so that there will be a minimum of conflicts between local and Association-wide events." In his 1962 report he said that the Association's activities to strengthen the Sunday School, Training Union, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood, and Music programs are limited "only by the degree of participation on the part of the churches." Concerned about certain "apparent trends being practiced" by the Gilbert Street Church," the Executive Council authorized Chairman L. D. Holt to appoint a committee to meet with the church officials. In October, 1964, the Council negotiated a compromise when North Street Church expressed interest in establishing a mission in an area in which New Hope and Hillcrest were already exploring the area.

There may have been some sentiment that the Association was trying to exercise a bit too much control, for in the opening session of the Fall, 1967, annual meeting Costner "commented briefly on the autonomous status of the Raleigh Association and stated that there is no desire on the part of the association to infringe upon the individual rights of

any church. The relationship between the association and the church is intended to be one of full cooperation." The minutes give no clue as to what prompted that statement, but Holt would not have made it if some concern had not been expressed.

Denominational Relationship

The Raleigh Baptist Association continued to function as an integral part of the larger denomination. Renting office space in the building which belonged to the North Carolina Baptist State Convention was purely a matter of convenience for the Association. Upon visiting the Association office, however, one subtly got the impression that there was a close connection. Organizational charts of the Association, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention do not show any direct connection. Yet the *Annual* of the Association show that the connection is assumed. The departments in the three agencies resemble each other, and the departmental reports to the Association constantly reflect the programs and activities of the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. For example, at its August 13, 1956, meeting, the Association's Executive Council instructed its Executive Committee "to appoint a committee to correlate our Associational expansion work with the Southern Baptist Convention five-year program of expansion. Again, in recommending the acceptance of a church transferring from another association in 1959 the Membership Committee said that they had investigated that association's "interest in and support of the total Baptist program." In that same year the Missions Committee said, "We would like to encourage every church within our association to work with the 30,000 Movement in starting new churches" (p. 41). In 1960, the Secretary of Missions prefaced his outline of the "Basic Objectives" of the Association for 1961 with the statement that "These basic objectives rest upon the 1961 emphasis of our Southern Baptist Convention Jubilee Advance." In his report to the Association in October, 1962, he said, "We will continue to disseminate information about the Cooperative Program so as to personalize and dramatize this plan of giving to world missions. Every church will be encouraged to give a larger percentage of its offerings to world missions through the Cooperative Program."

Nothing reflects the Raleigh Baptist Association's connection with the larger denominational organization better than the way its records speak of evangelism. In stating the purpose of the Association, the constitution has always spoken of the "fostering" or the "promotion" of evangelism. In his first report to the Association, after ten months on the job, Costner said that the Association exists "to help the churches win the lost to Christ and lead the saved to acknowledge the lordship of Christ in daily living." He never stopped talking that way. He regularly tied the Associational evangelistic emphases to those of the Southern Baptist Convention, as did the Evangelism Committee. Consequently the records are full of references that faithful Baptists will understand, but that will be a foreign vocabulary to other people: "The 30,000 movement," "The Jubilee Revival," "Proclamation and Witness." There were announcements of clinics on evangelism, state-wide Evangelistic Conferences, Evangelism Research Seminars. The most telling evidence is the fact that the form for the churches' annual reports to the Association asked for the number of revivals held and the number of baptisms.

A concern that the proper boundaries between the Association and the State Convention be maintained was expressed to the Council at its October, 1964 meeting when Jack Bullard asked for information on how information on controversial subjects that came before the Baptist State Convention was presented to the Association. "It was pointed out that our State Baptist Convention is an autonomous body, therefore our Association has no ethical right to accept, act upon, and make recommendations to it concerning any items pertaining to their business."

Social Ministry

During these years there was growing effort to bring the gospel to bear on the social problems that were troubling the nation. As we have seen, the Association had established a permanent Social Service Committee in the Fall of 1950. Through the years that committee had spoken with some degree of regularity (and predictability) to the issues of alcohol, gambling, and matters related to family life. In the 1960s, however, it began to make statements on other issues. The Committee's report to the Association on Friday, October 28, 1960, for example, spoke forcefully to two matters. The first reflected the injection of religion into

the hotly contested presidential election. Many people were genuinely concerned about Senator John F. Kennedy's Roman Catholicism, and many others used that concern for political purposes. In their report, the Committee affirmed both the importance of the separation of church and state and the responsibility of Christians to participate in the political process. Then they said, "We express our regret over the use of prejudice as a political weapon, even as we maintain our right to investigate the religion, character, and reputation of all candidates without being guilty of prejudice." Then they added, "We believe that the church is not a political institution and should not be used to further partisan political [causes], but we believe that the church should always proclaim principles that will enable the individual Christian to make Christian decisions in his citizenship."

The second matter was the even more volatile issue of race. Following the 1954 and 1955 Supreme Court decisions on racial segregation in the public schools, North Carolina had been moving grudgingly toward desegregation. The much-discussed Pearsall Plan, adopted in 1956, was never implemented and ultimately was declared unconstitutional. Meanwhile, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Charlotte moved in 1957 to begin desegregation, and by 1959 Craven County, Wayne County, Durham, and High Point had done so. In 1960 Raleigh was preparing to do the same. In that context the Social Service Committee said, "we reaffirm our belief in the Biblical perspective in human relations," and stated what they considered to be the pertinent basic Christian principles:

a. That every person is of worth and value in the sight of God and therefore must have worth and value to the Christian.

b. That every Christian is under obligation to love his neighbor, including members of minority groups, as he loves himself.

c. That the church is the fellowship of believers in which there should be no wedge of prejudice separating Christians of different races.

d. That the principle of democracy in government is basically Christian, and Christians, therefore, must recognize and defend the natural and constitutional rights of all citizens, irrespective of their origin or racial inheritance.

Then the committee encouraged the churches to preach and teach Christian principles, to give concrete suggestions to help Christians to deal with the problems, and "To adopt policies within the church that will prevent any unfortunate incidents when Negroes visit our churches. If test cases come, let us be sure that we pass the test and prove ourselves to be Christian churches." They concluded by encouraging the churches to create committees to study the issues "from the standpoint of the Christian ideal" and to seek ways "of decreasing the present disparity between faith and practice." After that, the Committee's reports were more cautious. In 1961 and 1962 there was no direct reference to race. In 1963 their statement called for orderly change by saying, "Discrimination must go but care must be taken lest something worse be put in its place. While strongly advocating equal rights for all we also strongly urge respect for the law and the personal, private rights of individuals." In 1964 they affirmed that "Christians should be guided in their attitudes and actions by the example of the Master and the truth of the gospel." In the committee's reports in '65, '66 and '67 there was no reference to race. In 1967, however, following an address by Corbin Cooper, Secretary of the Interracial Cooperation Department of the Baptist State Convention, the Association passed a motion proposed by Jack Bullard that the Association appoint a Committee on Interracial Co-operation "to extend and implement the program of Interracial Cooperation of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina within the Raleigh Baptist Association." In January of 1968 the Executive Council appointed the committee, but the later records give no indication of what the committee did.

In the last half of the 1960s other social issues began to demand the attention of the Association. At the April 18, 1966, meeting of the Executive Council Secretary of Missions Robert Costner spoke of the need for a study of "means of helping the deaf, the mentally retarded, and other groups in need of guidance." After some discussion, the Council passed Jack Bullard's motion "that the president appoint a Community Action Committee ... to study plans to interpret and coordinate the work of the Association." In his annual report to the Association in October, 1966, Costner said:

> There is a growing awareness among our church leaders that we must reach out to minister to special groups in our society. These are: Adults who can not read, weak family unities—with

> resulting juvenile problems, families with mentally retarded children, apartment dwellers—increasingly difficult to reach, gainfully employed young people—living in apartments and boarding houses, and not being reached by our churches.

In his annual report in 1967 Costner spoke of a spiritual commitment which, he said, "will also lead us to seek racial justice, compassion and help for the economically deprived, and relief from all of the oppressive forces of our society." He added that "Our presently formed Social Service Committee of the Association can and will give effective leadership in these areas of our social concern."

The Social Service Committee, in its 1967 report to the Association, focused on a cooperative approach to dealing with social issues. In dealing with Juvenile Rehabilitation, they suggested the election of "an Associational Juvenile Rehabilitation Director" and "an Associational ministry to support the juvenile court and assist leaders in the local churches." That action was taken, and the Director made his first report at the next annual session of the Association.

The Raleigh Association assumed a significant responsibility for the Baptist Good Will Center in the fall of 1969. The Center had originated in the late 1930s with the work of members of Tabernacle Baptist Church, particularly Mrs. R. P. Shuffler, in a needy area of Raleigh known as "Smoky Hollow." With significant help from the Woman's Missionary Union, it had grown rapidly. In 1943 it was formally established as a Good Will Center, with an eleven-member governing board, six of whom were representatives of the six Woman's Missionary Societies in Raleigh. Property was acquired, a director was employed, the work expanded, and in a short time the agency became well-known and highly respected for its work. After some twenty-five years, realizing that a broader base of support was needed, the Board began negotiations with Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Raleigh Baptist Association. At the October, 1969, annual session of the Association, the Secretary of Missions announced:

> The Raleigh Baptist Association entered into a new phase of work on June 1, 1969. After months of serious study by as special committee of the Baptist Good Will Center and in consultation with Mr. Ernest Upchuch of the City and Metropolitan

Missions Department of the Baptist State Convention, and a visit by personnel of the Home Mission Board, this new relationship was established.

The work of the Baptist Center is now under the supervision of the Raleigh Baptist Association. It is supported financially by the cooperative efforts of our churches, the Home Mission Board, and the Baptist State Convention's Department of City and Metropolitan Missions.

Membership in the Churches

Earlier we looked at the total membership and the average Sunday School attendance in eleven older churches (selected randomly) 1944, 1948, and 1956. Now we add the figures for 1970 (for consistency, the *total* membership rather than the *resident* membership is noted, because not all churches report the breakdown):

	Membership				Sunday School Average Attendance			
	1944	1948	1956	1970	1944	1948	1956	1970
Apex	287	539	586	662	125	181	305	265
Bethany	236	175	326	376	127	75	130	145
Cary	435	360	762	1390	141	180	417	540
Garner	122	250	430	1067	87	118	235	468
Green Level	290	392	378	327	134	160	183	127
Knightdale	339	390	529	710	113	159	327	260
New Hill	66	125	123	173	45	77	93	55
Raleigh, First	1378	1898	1852	1600	495	519	723	459
Stony Hill	215	150	396	334	45	50	160	102
Wake Cross Roads	309	245	484	559	112	100	335	242
Zebulon	400	421	652	691	153	202	330	261

To this we now add the membership figures and average attendance at Sunday school for the churches established between 1956 and 1970.

Church	Established	Members after one year	Members in 1956	Members in 1970	Sunday School average attendance 1970
St. John's	1950	54	291	431	172
Longview	1950	65	433	972	377
Carolina Pines	1950	62	321	430	150
Emmanuel	1950	102	488	877	355
Wakeminster	1951	52	103	123	46
Boylan Heights	1952	65	201	213	52
Neuse	1952	?	99	114 (in 1960)	
Boulevard	1953	107	144	437	184
Wilder's Grove	1954	75	122	371	204
Ridge Road	1954	124	191	603	300
Highland	1954	124	178	390	196
Trinity	1956	149	107	566	331

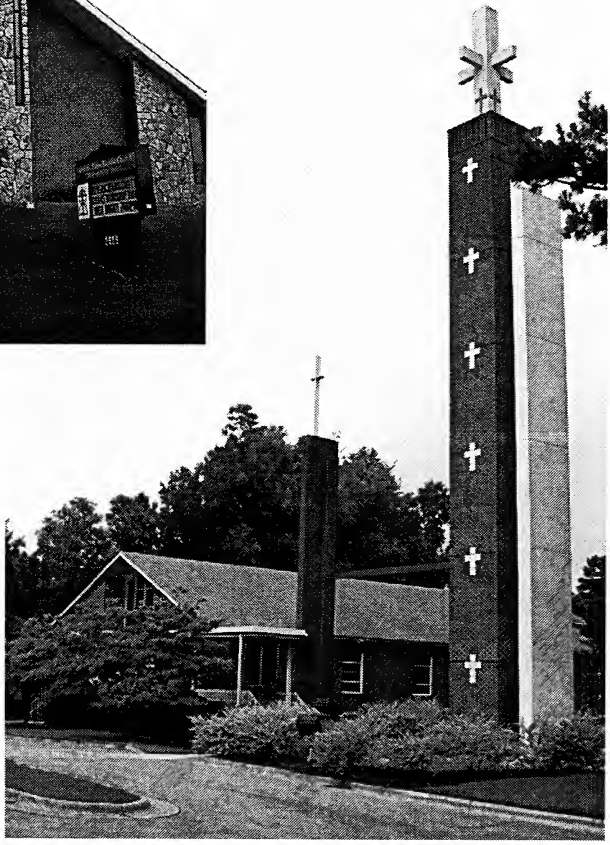
And finally, we add the statistics on the churches established between 1958 and 1970.

Church	Established	Membership after one year	Membership 1970	Average Sunday School attendance 1970
Fellowship	1958	57	285	252
Turner Memorial	1961	84	135	90
Ridgecrest	1962	50	102	62
Greenwood Forest	1963	135	184	147
Macedonia	1963	79	144	97
North Cary	1967	(no report—but in 1968 "Liberty BC" accepted into assoc.)		
Aversboro Road	1970	(no report)		
Crabtree Valley	1970	69		
Green Pines	1970	155		

In 1970 there were 87 churches in the association. The total membership in those 87 churches was 42,104, up from 32,649 members in 82 churches in 1956. Strangely, the reported average attendance at Sunday school in Association churches in 1970 showed no significant increase: it was 15,939 in 1956, and 16,080 in 1970. While nearly all of the older churches had experienced some growth in membership during

that fourteen-year period, the most significant numerical growth was in the new churches. That is to be expected, of course, because the population of the area served by the older churches was relatively stable, while the new churches were located in new and growing residential areas.

Carolina Pines Baptist Church (left)
St. John's Baptist Church (below)



Raleigh Baptist Association *Ministries Today*

Summer missionaries worked with Pilot Baptist Church and other churches in the Pilot community conducting block parties, children's clubs, youth activities and other outreach activities — July 2003

Chapter Four

Broadening the Ministry 1970–1982

As Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon on July 20, 1969, the first man ever to do so, he said, "That's one small step for man; one great leap for mankind." For the next decade and a half there was one great achievement in space exploration after another. The U.S. robot Mariner 9 orbited Mars in 1971. In 1973 the nation placed Skylab into orbit, and in that same year and the next our space vehicles transmitted to earth valuable information about Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury. Viking 1 and Viking 2 were landed on Mars in 1976. The space shuttle Enterprise completed its first tests flight in 1977, and in 1983 the shuttle Challenger made its first voyage into space. The United States was well on its way in the exploration of outer space.

Embroiled in South Vietnam since 1965, the nation was increasingly divided over our involvement there. Protests became strong and vociferous, and eventually it became apparent that the question was not *whether* we would withdraw, but *when* and *how* we would do it. When the last of our ground troops left that country in 1972, Americans breathed a sigh of relief. Not happy with the results, they hoped nevertheless that at last life could get back to normal.

Meanwhile, President Nixon had ended America's 21-year-old embargo on trade with China and the way was prepared for the renewal of diplomatic relations in 1979. Tensions were relaxed between the Soviet Union and the United States. Two years later, war broke out in the Middle East and the Arab nations precipitated an energy crisis in the U.S. by declaring an embargo on oil shipments to this country.

In the midst of these developments, the nation was engulfed in an unprecedented domestic crisis. During the Presidential campaign in 1972, seven men connected with the Committee to Reelect the President were arrested for breaking into the Democratic Headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. The extent of the President's involvement in the events was not clear, but subsequent investigations led the Senate to begin the impeachment process against him and ultimately he resigned.

Turmoil in the Near East continued to trouble the United States. Just as the war in Vietnam was coming to an end, the always-tense Arab-Israeli situation exploded into the Yom Kippur War in October, 1973. Our government came to the support of Israel and in retaliation the nations declared an embargo on oil exports to the United States. In 1977, President Carter mediated a peace accord between Israel and Egypt. But when the Shah of Iran was ousted in 1978 he was given refuge by the United States. Protesting Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy and took 88 American hostages who were held until just hours after President Carter left office, on January 20, 1981. Four months later, the Marines were withdrawn from Lebanon. Soon after he took office, President Reagan agreed to sell military equipment to Saudi Arabia, and almost at the same time banned the sale of high-technology equipment to the Soviet Union. In 1983, 241 U. S. Marines who were part of an international peacekeeping force in Beirut, Lebanon, were killed in the bombing of the U. S. Embassy.

Many important decisions on domestic issues were made during this era. The voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1970. After ten years of debate and voting, the Equal Rights Amendment was finally defeated. The Supreme Court upheld busing as a means of desegregating the public schools, ruled that the death penalty constituted "cruel and unusual punishment," and declared that state laws banning abortion were unconstitutional. Issues of the separation of church and state were debated by politicians, the voters, and the courts.

On the religious front, the United States was tremendously affected by what was termed variously as "the born-again movement," "the new evangelical movement," and the "Christian right." Many people were surprised by its strength. But strong it was, particularly with middle-class America. Indeed, *Newsweek* called 1976 "the year of the evangelical." Jimmy Carter, an evangelical Christian, was elected President. Conservative religious books hit the best-seller list, and evangelical student organizations

such as Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ and Navigators flourished. Evangelicals were highly successful in their use of radio and television, and Billy Graham remained the best-known preacher in America. While the "Electronic Church" reached people by the millions, there were wide differences between the leaders—from Oral Roberts to Robert Schuller, from Jimmy Swaggart to Pat Robertson, from Jim Bakker to Billy James Hargis. But each had a following.

Evangelical Christians began to take direct political action to express their unhappiness with the perspectives and the morality which they found reflected on television, in the movies, and in periodicals. They believed that the family was being threatened by current social and political changes. They campaigned against abortion, pornography, homosexuality, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Many were increasingly dissatisfied with government policy on both domestic and foreign issues. Capitalizing on this mood, in the late 1970s a number of organizations seeking to elect conservatives to national office were formed across the nation. The most influential was Jerry Falwell's "Moral Majority," founded in 1979. Within a year that group claimed half a million members. Almost as strong was Richard Zone's "Christian Voice," which claimed 200,000 supporters. The combined membership of all such organizations constituted only a fraction of the Americans who thought of themselves as religiously conservative. Yet so close was the national election of 1980 that they proved to be a major factor in the Republican victory in that year.

The conservative shift contributed to an increased blurring of denominational distinctives. During this era it became increasingly common for persons to switch denominations as they searched for a local church to join. Whether a church was Fundamentalist or Evangelical or Conservative or Liberal came to be more important to many people than whether it was Baptist or Methodist or Presbyterian or Episcopal. One study in the late 1970s found that 25% of the Presbyterians who moved their membership from one church to another switched denominations! For Baptists the figure may not have been that high, for they were generally recognized as Evangelical, but rare was the Baptist church that did not have members who came to them from other denominations.

This movement became divisive in the major denominations. Different perspectives were reflected in conflicting views on issues of sexual morality such as abortion and homosexuality, and on social issues such as the status of women, the teaching of evolution, and prayer in the

public schools. So sharp were the differences that each side tended to caricature the other. In *The Restructuring of American Religion*, Robert Wuthnow said that a recent study showed that "conservatives thought liberals were not very religious or dedicated to the Christian faith, took an 'anything goes' attitude toward religious and moral issues, tended to be too outspoken, and accepted uncritically every thing their denominations told them." And liberals, in turn, thought of conservatives as "intolerant, rigid, fanatical, close-minded, simplistic, and harsh" (p. 214).

Southern Baptists were caught up in this division. Historically an evangelical group, by other Christians they were regarded as conservative. They had theological differences among themselves, but they managed to cooperate with one another. Not since the Landmark Movement of the 19th century had their unity been threatened. In the spring of 1979, however, a group led by Judge Paul Pressler and Rev. Paige Patterson, both from Texas, launched a movement by which the most conservative wing of the denomination could gain control. Over a ten-year period they managed to achieve their goal, and ultimately the character of the Southern Baptist Convention was significantly changed.

With considerable success, North Carolina Baptists struggled to maintain their unity in spite of the broad theological diversity within their ranks. For a time they continued to cooperate with one another in missions, education, and social services. Ultimately, however, there were to be power struggles—albeit less traumatic than what had occurred in the Southern Baptist Convention.

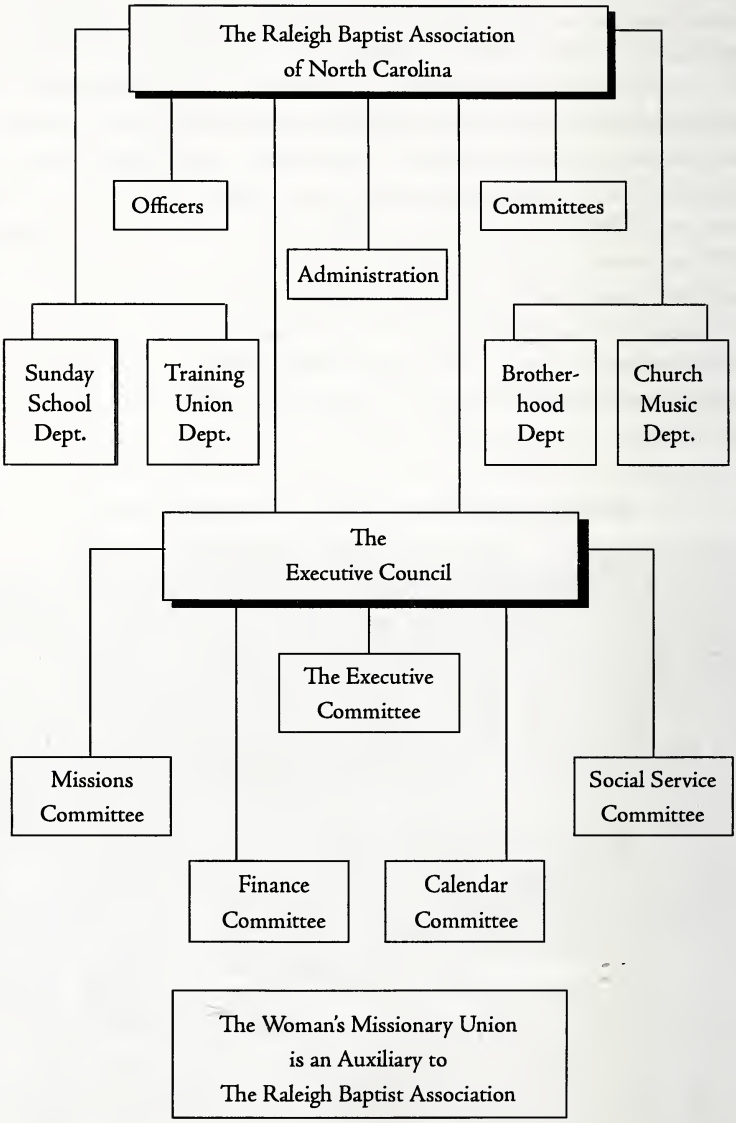
In this difficult situation the Raleigh Baptist Association tried to meet the demands of a cooperative ministry in a changing social setting. The population of the area continued to grow, increasing by more than a third in the decade of the '70s, and by another twenty percent between 1980 and 1985. Most of the newcomers were white, well-educated, economically secure. The majority came from other parts of the nation, but a growing number came from other countries. Most found homes in the city of Raleigh (which expanded its boundaries), but Cary experienced a significant increase also. Travel in the area became more congested, the schools became overcrowded, and many churches experienced unprecedented growth. The Association found itself hard-pushed to keep up with the growing population and the changing social situation.

Organization and Staff

For the eleven years after the first "Director of Missions" was employed (in 1945), the Association had had no office. The Director of Missions operated out of his home. Since November, 1956, the Association had rented office space in the building of the Baptist State Convention, located on Hillsboro Street in Raleigh. Early in 1971, however, the Convention informed the Association that they needed that space, and the Association moved into an adjacent building, also owned by the Convention. Six years later the Convention needed that space also, and in 1977 the offices were moved into the James C. Greene building, located on West Morgan Street. At that time the Association began to search for its own property. Three years were to pass, however, before it could move into its own property. Finally, the Executive Council recommended the purchase of the St. Philip's Lutheran Church property at 2600 New Bern Avenue, and on October 30, 1980, the Association approved the recommendation. The building was renovated and occupied in short order.

Raleigh Baptist Association on New Bern Avenue

Diagram
Showing the Organizational Set-Up of
The Raleigh Baptist Association



When the Raleigh and the Central Associations had merged in 1945, a simple organizational structure had been set up, with most of the work being done through the Director of Missions and a twenty-one member Executive Committee. Six years later (1951), in an effort to get more lay involvement, the Executive Committee had been replaced by an Executive Council composed of all pastors and one lay representative from each church in the Association. That meant that there could be more than a hundred and fifty members of the Council! It was the duty of the Council to "carry forward the work of the associations between sessions," meeting quarterly to do so. It soon became apparent that such a large group could not (or would not) gather so frequently to deal with routine matters of operation. Consequently, an Executive Committee of the Executive Council was added in 1956. That committee was composed of the officers of the Association and the chairpersons of the four standing committees. The Council continued to meet quarterly, but those meetings evolved into mini-sessions of the association. From time to time thereafter there had been minor changes in the Constitution, but the basic structure remained the same for more than twenty years.

A significant structural change, perhaps prompted by an expansion of the staff, took place in the mid-1970s. In June, 1969, the Association had assumed responsibility for the operation of the Good Will Center, which it had renamed the "Baptist Center." To supervise its operation, the Association called Rev. Roy L. Hood to a newly-created position, Director of Christian Social Ministries. Supported jointly by the Home Mission Board, the Baptist State Convention, and the Raleigh Baptist Association, Hood began his work on September 1, 1970. Ann Wooten was then employed to be Director of the Baptist Center, working under Hood's supervision. Hood remained with the Association until July, 1974, when he left to become Director of the Pre-Release and After-Care Regional Office of the State Department of Corrections for the State of North Carolina. Six months later (January, 1975), Wooten also resigned. Wooten was not replaced, but Mrs. Frances Jones replaced Hood on February 1, 1975. A native of Rolesville, North Carolina, Jones had graduated from Campbell College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She had taught in Greensboro and Wake Forest, and in Taichung, Taiwan.

The need to expand the staff prompted some people to begin to talk about a need to re-organize. On April 16, 1973, the Executive Council

appointed a committee to study "ways and means of improving the work of the Associational Executive Council." Their major concern was to increase lay involvement. Committee chairman William Rogers presented a report to the Association in the fall of 1973, and on his motion, the responsibilities of his committee were expanded "to include an evaluation and review of the total life of our association: our purpose, our needs, our opportunities, our priorities, our actions, and our organizations." During the following year Rogers and Jack Porter, a member of the Constitution Committee, made regular progress reports to the Executive Council, and at the Fall, 1974, annual session of the Association they presented their proposals. In summarizing their recommendations, they said:

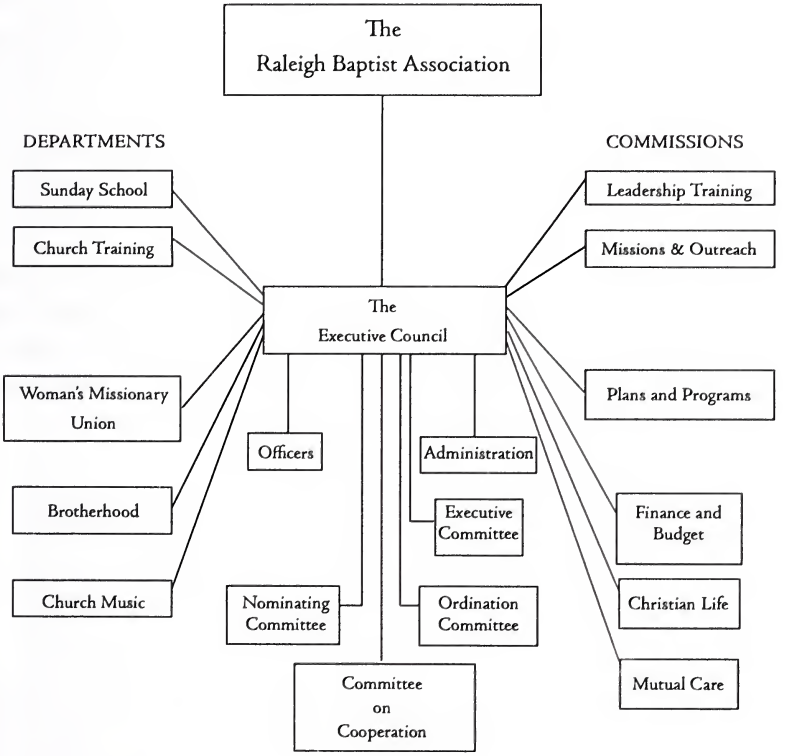
> In order to accomplish the objectives of our Association as we were able to discern them, we propose that the work of the Association be organized in an Executive Council, five Departments, six Commissions and three Committees. We recommend retaining the present Departments including Sunday School, Church Training, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood and Church Music to help promote strong programs in these areas among the churches. The Commissions proposed are Leadership Training, Missions and Outreach, Christian Life, Finance and Budget, Plans and Programs and Mutual Care. Each Commission would be composed of 15 members, each from a different church, elected by the Association on recommendation of the Nominating Committee, serving rotating terms of three years. Each Commission would have responsibility for planning and executing the work in its assigned area. The specific duties of each Commission are enumerated in Article III of the recommendation on Bylaws. The Executive Council would remain the same with the added opportunity of helping to coordinate the work of the Commissions. The proposed committees are the Executive Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Ordination Committee and the Committee on Cooperation.

Under this new structure, all departments, commissions, committees, officers, and employees, reported directly to the Executive Council, which in turn reported to the Association. The necessary constitutional changes were approved and became effective in 1975.

Soon after this re-structuring, Bob Costner, Director of Missions, submitted his resignation. At the October, 1977, annual session, he announced his retirement, to be effective February 18, 1978. Speaking of his twenty years with the Association he said, "These have been happy years, and you have given me a sense of fulfillment in your kind acceptance of my leadership. Deep satisfaction has been mine as I have observed the development of strong pastoral leadership and laity leadership in our churches."

Immediately after Costner notified the Executive Council of his plans to retire, the Council had instructed the Executive Committee to

Diagram Showing the Organizational Set-Up of the Raleigh Baptist Association



appoint a search committee for his successor. The Executive Committee was instructed to include on that three-to-five member committee a pastor, a Christian educator, a lay person, and a female. The first action of the search committee was to draw up a set of guidelines which they expected to follow in their search. The Executive Committee's discussion of those guidelines implied that they felt that they had been inadequately informed about Costner's activities. The minutes note that "There was a general feeling among the group that some kind of report should be given quarterly by the director on visits to churches, ministries performed, date and location."

Costner's successor was forty-nine year old Charles L. McMillan. A native of Smyrna, Georgia, McMillan was graduated from Smyrna High School in 1946. He earned an A.B. from Mercer University, completing his work there in 1950. He was pastor of the Woodstock Baptist Church, Woodstock, Georgia, from 1950 through 1953. During his last year there he studied at Columbia Theological Seminary. He became pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Raleigh in 1954, where he remained until 1961. While serving Highland he studied at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, receiving a B.D. in 1958. He became pastor of the Kinnett Memorial Baptist Church in Burlington in 1961. In 1972 he left that church to become Director of Missions of the Mt. Zion Association. It was from that position that he came to the Raleigh Association in 1978.

McMillan spent his first year assessing the situation in the Association. In his first report, presented at the annual session in the fall of 1979, he devoted three-fourths of his statement to a summary of what the Association was doing. In his final paragraph he looked to the future, suggesting in his comments what he believed was needed:

> The new year holds some challenges and question marks. How can we encourage and accomplish church growth; reach the ever-increasing population of lost and unchurched people; improve church leadership? How can we tell **church people about associational ministries so that support or non-support is based on accurate information?** How can we minister to 30,000 college students, to 20,000 internationals, find a pastor fluent in Spanish or Vietnamese? What sort of ministry will reach singles; help families and pregnant teenagers

> (62% of whom are pregnant illegitimately)? How can we get more of the decision-making people of our churches at our executive council and annual meeting? How do we reach people in apartments and Mobile Home Parks? How can we help the blind, the deaf, the retarded, the mobility handicapped? These and many more questions need to be answered this new year. May God's spirit guide in our decision making.

Less than a year later, in June, 1981, McMillan drafted a document on "The Annual Meeting of the Association." He began by observing that the format of associational meetings had remained basically unchanged for two and a half centuries. While "fellowship and mutual care" was the original purpose, he said, "togetherness in mission" had become the glue for cooperative effort. Then he addressed the question of the frequency of meetings of the association and the content of the sessions. Acknowledging the need for reports from the agencies of the State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention, he was not sure that one annual meeting of the Association could meet that need and conduct its own work at the same time. Near the end of the document he made a statement that reflects the struggle going on within the Southern Baptist Convention. He said that "The place to have doctrinal discussions, I believe, is the association rather than the State or Southern Convention. But in the association there must be not merely doctrinal address, but dialogue. Large sessions are helpful, but not adequate. We must find ways to involve the people." In his final paragraph he said that the fourfold purpose of the association was fellowship and mutual encouragement, missions and outreach, church growth and development, and mission promotion and ministry. He concluded that

> If quarterly meetings are held around each emphasis there should be time and opportunity to communicate about each area. If the meeting is composed of the heads of local church organizations plus the pastor and other interested people—you should be communicating with the right people.

This sounds as if McMillan were interested in the possibility of the quarterly meetings of the Executive Council being transformed into a full-fledged session of the Association The records do not show that any official action was taken on that suggestion. Beginning in 1982, however,

the *Annual* includes a summary of the "Quarterly Associational Meeting Minutes."

One important development in the work of the Association during this era was the growing participation of women. As we have observed, in the earlier years, while approximately half of the messengers to the annual sessions were women, few women served on committees and none were elected officers. The churches, however, could not help but be affected by the impact of the increasing involvement of women in business, in the professions, and in politics during the 1970s. In 1971 the staff consisted of two men and a female secretary. Three women were among the forty-two Executive Council committee members, but none was on the seven-person Executive Committee. On thirteen standing committees with a total membership of fifty-five, seven members were women. None chaired a committee, and three of the seven were on the Baptist Center Committee. The situation in 1976 was quite different, though women were still far short of equality in representation. The employed staff consisted of a male Director of Missions, a female secretary, and a female Director of Christian Social Ministries. Under the new organization, there were six Commissions, most of which had fifteen members; twenty-one of those ninety commission members were women. Three or four women were on each standing committee of the Association—except for the Ordination Committee, on which there was none. Four women served on the Executive Council, along with forty-five laymen and all of the pastors in the Association.

The Association's Ordination Committee broke with tradition in 1976 by recommending a woman for ordination. They were well aware that what they did was different, and perhaps even controversial. In previous years they had prefaced their report by the simple statement, "During this past year the Association's Committee on Ordination worked in counseling, advising and recommending the following persons to be ordained by Baptist churches." In 1976, however, they prefaced their report with a carefully-worded statement of the function of the committee and of the final responsibility of the ordaining church:

> Ordination into the Baptist ministry concerns both the church which ordains and her sister churches because a candidate ordained by one church will presumably serve other churches. It is clearly understood, however, that the ordaining church

> is only seeking the advice and counsel of her sister churches through this committee, and that the ordaining church retains the authority in determining whether a candidate is to be ordained.

Pullen Memorial Church had requested that the committee examine Lana Lawrence, the committee had done so and recommended that she be ordained, and Pullen had ordained her on May 11, 1976. In the years that followed a significant number of women from many churches in the Association were examined, recommended, and ordained.

History was made in another way 1981 and 1982 when Dorothy (Mrs. Bill) Goodwin served as moderator of the Association. She had long been active in the Association, serving as a messenger from the Apex church almost every year since 1967. Frequently she was a member of the Committee on Order of Business, and occasionally on other committees. She had been vice-moderator in 1979 and 1980, and was therefore in an influential position during some significant changes in the life and work of the Association. It is interesting that she was in those positions during the first four years of the organized take-over of the Southern Baptist Convention by the people of the inerrantist movement. That movement had not yet significantly affected either the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina or the Raleigh Baptist Association, but its impact would soon be felt. Her service both as vice-moderator and as moderator was unique, therefore, not only in that she was the first woman to hold those offices—but also the last!

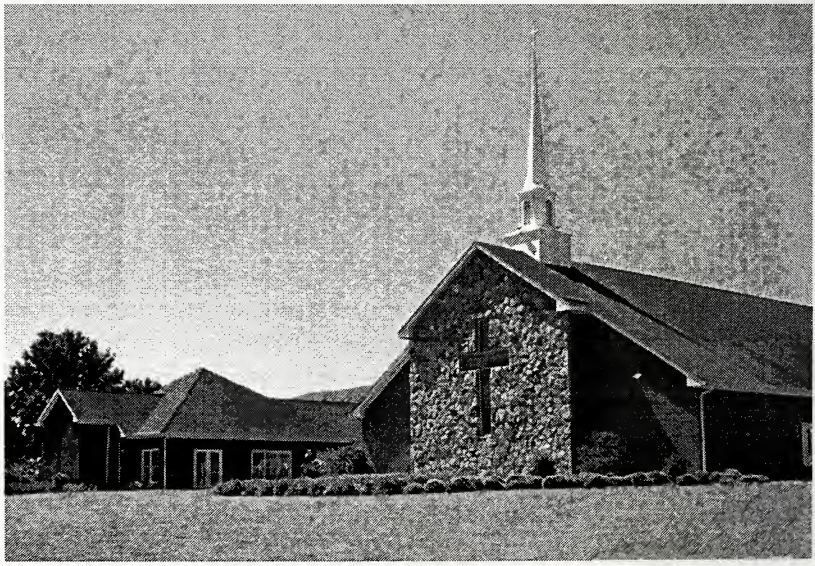
The Churches

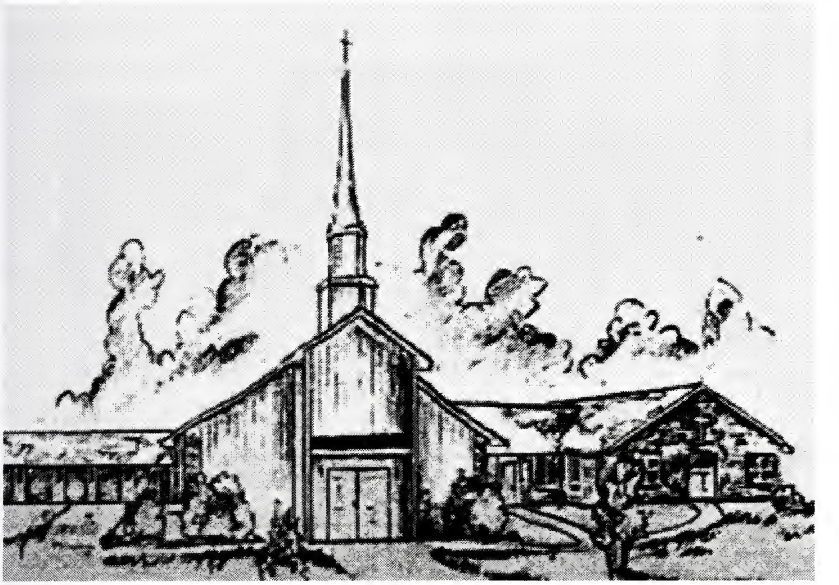
Although the population of Wake County in general, and of Raleigh and Cary in particular, increased by nearly forty percent in the 1970s and early 1980s, the number of people involved in churches of the Raleigh Baptist Association did not keep pace with that growth. The total membership was up a bit, from 42,104 in 1970 to 49,423 in 1982. Average attendance in Sunday school, however, remained essentially the same—16,080 in 1970 and 15,485 in 1982. The number of churches in the Association remained almost exactly the same during this period—eighty-seven in 1970 and eighty-eight in 1982. Why the

pace of establishing new churches slowed so we cannot be sure. We do know that the possibilities for new missions were being explored. We also know, however, that on several occasions the Missions Committee complained of being handicapped by a shortage of funds.

Seven churches named in the Association's records for 1970 list did not appear on the 1982 list, but eight new names were listed in 1982. Six of the eight were new churches. North Cary had been organized in 1967, but its name did not appear as a member of the Association until 1974. Pleasant Ridge, which had been organized in 1969, was accepted under watchcare by the Executive Council in January, 1970, and into full membership by the Association at its annual session the following October. Green Pines was organized in the Brookhaven area near Knightdale in 1970 and was accepted as a member church of the Association in 1971. On Highway 70 west of Raleigh, Crabtree Valley was also organized as a mission in 1970 and accepted as a member church in 1971. Aversboro Road was organized in 1971 and was first listed as a member church in 1973. Faith Baptist Church in Apex was accepted under watchcare in 1976, and into full membership in 1977.

Green Pines Baptist Church





North Cary Baptist Church

The seventh new church was a work that was begun in northeast Raleigh in 1978. That work was initiated neither by the Association nor by a church, but by a group from Forest Hills Church acting on their own and asking for help from the Association. Apparently some people had questions about this development, for the report of the Missions and Outreach Commission to the Executive Committee on June 29 of that year makes unusually reassuring statements:

> A group of approximately seven families from Forest Hills Church initiated the idea and have met with our commission and are busy making plans. They have no conflict or ill will at Forest Hills, but feel there is a need and good possibility of a successful Baptist work in that area. They seem to be a very responsible, cooperative and dedicated group of Southern Baptists. They asked for support from the association and Forest Hills. However, they have moved ahead and formulated these plans (1) to locate a meeting place and begin service by October 1, (2) David Horner, minister of youth at Forest Hills,

Providence Baptist Church

> will serve as their pastor—receiving half of his present salary from Forest Hills through December 21, 1978. The remainder of his salary will be paid by the new congregation.

The church was organized as Providence Baptist Church in 1979 and accepted as a member church in 1980. The minutes record the organization of no other new church until 1983.

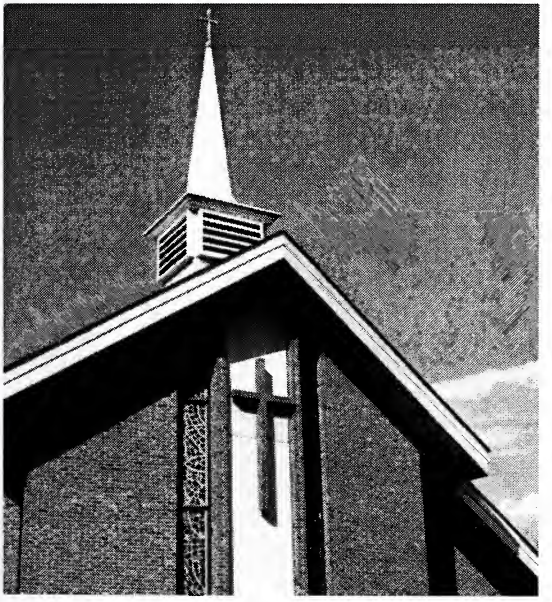
The eighth was an unusual accession to the Association. Charles McMillan, who had recently become Director of Missions, brought to the Executive Committee August, 1979, a request for membership by the Good Hope Christian Church. He said that the Missions and Outreach Commission had been working with them for some time. He observed that the church's application for membership "had not been a hasty decision; the pastor contacted him approximately six months ago. It is an old established church who has used Southeastern students for 16 years as pastors. Since they have done so and plan to continue they felt it wise to seek admission as Southern Baptists." The Executive Committee accepted the church under watchcare, and in 1980 the Association approved their recommendation that the church be accepted into membership.

On two widely-separated occasions during this era the need to establish new churches was brought to the attention of the Association. The first was in the fall of 1972, when Secretary of Missions Bob Costner said in his annual report to the Association that during his fifteen years with the association twelve new churches and eight mission stations had

been established. He added that one of his goals was to continue the effort "to establish new churches and missions where they are needed." During the remaining five years of his tenure, however, only one other church, Providence, was established. The second occasion came ten years later in the report of the Missions and Outreach Commission at the annual meeting of the Association in October, 1982. Reflecting a careful study of the 1980 census figures and of the population growth patterns in the area, the Commission concluded that "we should think in terms of at least five new churches for each of the next five years."

One church withdrew from the Association in 1975, but the records give no reasons for their action. The Minutes of the Associational Executive Council Report simply note that "Mr. Costner read a letter from the pastor of the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church that the church be dropped from all records of the Raleigh Baptist Association." The Council took the appropriate vote to honor the request.

Without the help of the Association, Macedonia Baptist Church had been established in 1963 by a core group coming from Swift Creek Church. They had secured property on Holly Springs Road and built ambitiously, expecting a more rapid growth than actually took place. They encountered some significant financial difficulties, however, and for a time received assistance from the pastoral aid funds of the Baptist State Convention. Ultimately, however, their situation worsened and the Association came to their rescue. At the quarterly meeting on July 27, 1982, the Association voted



Macedonia Baptist Church

to assist the church in rebuilding its program by assuming the church's financial assets and obligations, providing leadership, and reorganizing. The Missions and Outreach Commission reported to the Association in the fall of 1982:

> The church had an indebtedness of approximately $200,000 and the attendance and income made it impossible to meet the obligation. The church is now functioning under the leadership of the association through the Missions and Outreach Commission. The attendance and interest at the church are on the increase. Six churches, Apex, Calvary, Fuquay-Varina, Greenwood Forest, Mt. Vernon, and North Street, have enlisted a person or persons to spend six months or a year assisting with the work of the church. Many of our churches have made contributions to the association to assist with the indebtedness.

Charles McMillan, Director of Missions, worked closely with the church, and G. W. Bullard served as interim pastor to help them get on their feet. The Association's assistance continued until the church was finally able to function independently in 1988.

Created under the new structure adopted by the Association in 1976, the Mutual Care Commission was charged with the responsibility of "communication and cooperation among the churches." In fulfilling that obligation, the Commission set about developing a mechanism for sharing information and helping new pastors become involved in the operation of the Association. It also set about working with Southeastern Seminary to provide internships for students. Soon after its formation, the Commission created a plan for dealing with a growing problem. The first significant indication of that problem appears in the Commission's report to the Association in the fall of 1979:

> The commission also developed and collected materials dealing with pastor-people relationships. These resources are designed to give direction to churches during the interim stage between pastors, to churches experiencing conflict, or to churches who are seeking to discover their identity, potential, or future direction. The commission has also been available to offer counseling to individuals or churches who need guidance about church relationships.

In its 1980 report the Commission said. "We have come to see the value in a church adopting a procedure or policy for dealing with Pastor/Staff church relationships," and made the following specific suggestions:

1. The church shall nominate each year a Church/Staff Committee. Upon arrival of any new staff member this committee shall meet with that person and shall agree on specific expectations of the covenant relationship between staff and church,. Any future complaints or grievances of a serious nature shall be lodged with the chairman of the Church/Staff Committee.
2. The chairman of the Church/Staff Committee shall try to clarify problems and seek a solution with persons directly involved in the issues.
3. If the conflict cannot be resolved and serious problems remain then the entire Church/Staff Committee shall be called in to review the situation and suggest alternatives.
4. If resolution appears distant the committee may contact an outside consultant such as the Director of Missions or the chairman of the Mutual Care Commission, Raleigh Baptist Association. This and every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid the possible polarization of the church body over the matter."

While subsequent reports do not indicate involvement in any specific situation, they do show a growing awareness of the problem. In 1982, for example, after speaking of their "welcome packets" for new pastors, there was a discussion of "the care and support of pastors and staff," and a concern for "the care and enrichment of ministers' wives and children," they added that for several months they had been talking with a Raleigh attorney about a Christian service "to mediate disputes among Christians outside of a court of law. A mediation panel composed of lawyers, ministers, and lay people would assist in this process."

The Denomination

In his final message to the Association, Director of Missions Robert Costner said, "We have used our Southern Baptist Convention themes for special emphasis each year." That statement reflects the fact that the

Association was viewed as an integral unit in a much broader organization. Through 1971 there were reports from the Annuity Board, the Baptist Foundation, the *Biblical Recorder*, the Children's Homes, Christian Higher Education, the Cooperative Program, the Homes for the Aging, the Baptist Hospital, the Missions agencies of the Conventions, and so on. Though the reports were not always read aloud in the meetings, their very official acceptance reflects the close relationship between the Association and the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

From 1972 onward, however, the picture was different. The relationship with the agencies continued, but the reports did not. The only agencies in the above list making reports in 1972 were the Children's Homes and Christian Higher Education. All other activities reported in the *Annual* were those of committees and employees of the Association. The State and the Southern Conventions were not ignored in the records; indeed, there were frequent references to them. In 1979, for example, Charles McMillan spoke of conferring with Southeastern Seminary officials and with the head of the State Convention's Denominational Relations Office about internships for Seminary students. In 1982 the Long-Range Planning Committee reported that one of its stated objectives was "To promote a close relationship between the Raleigh Baptist Association, the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention." In short, while the structural relationships with the larger group were neither changed nor ignored, the emphasis was turned to local activities.

We have observed that the organized effort to change the character of the Southern Baptist Convention began in the late 1970s. The people and the churches of the Raleigh Baptist Association were not all of the same mind about what was taking place. Charles McMillan, Director of Missions at that time, was quite anxious that theological differences not be allowed to divide or threaten the work of the Association. In his 1981 message to the Association he said:

> We need each other to realize that our understanding of God and His will is at best partial and in hearing how others perceive God and express their faith in Him our own faith grows and is enriched. The association provides a setting in which diversity of religious expression can be pursued yet we can join in cooperative ministries.

He concluded that what ties us together is "our togetherness in missions." His effort to avoid doctrinal controversy and to focus on the mission of the Association proved to be quite effective.

Expanding the Witness

Although fewer new churches were established in this era than in previous years, there was a significant development of new types of ministry. Throughout the years there had been a variety of outreach ministries, some by local congregations and some by the Association. First the Woman's Missionary Union and then the Brotherhood had been active in a variety of ways in reaching people with special needs and people not normally involved in the church. The support of the hospital, the children's homes, and the Allied Church League was an important social ministry. The first report of a standing Committee on Social Services had been presented to the Association in the annual session of 1951, and for years thereafter the Committee had spoken to a variety of social concerns. The Committee on Social Services, however, was authorized only to speak to the issues which were troubling society. It had no authority to speak for the Association, and no authority to take any action.

In the late 1960s some people began to suggest that the Association should do more than speak about social problems. There were expressions of concern about people with physical and/or mental handicaps, economically deprived, and juvenile delinquents. In the fall of 1969, William Mills, Chairman of the Missions Committee, spoke with great urgency about the need for a "revised organization" and a "restudy of Associational Missions as such." In the same session Tom Bland, reporting on an "Urban Studies Seminar" recently held at Southeastern Seminary, listed a number of things he thought the Association needed to do, including undertaking new ministries "outside the four walls" of the churches, exploring the possibility of Christian Coffee Houses, beginning more week-day ministries, building bridges of understanding across racial lines, becoming involved in meeting basic needs such as housing, expanding the work of ministry to international students, becoming involved in referral services, and taking a new look at institutional ministries.

The Association took a significant step in the direction of social involvement in the late summer of 1970. It had just accepted, in June, 1969,

the responsibility for operating the Good Will Center which the Woman's Missionary Union had been operating for years. The current directors of the Center had resigned shortly after that change. On August 17, 1970, Director of Missions, Bob Costner, announced to the Executive Council that Rev. Roy L. Hood would become the Director of the Baptist Center and the Youth and Family Service ministry on September 1. His work was to be supported jointly by the Home Mission Board, the Baptist State Convention, and the Raleigh Baptist Association.

Shortly after Hood's arrival Ann Wooten was employed to be Director of Activities. Hood was therefore able to concentrate on moving associational missions in the direction suggested by the Missions Committee in 1969. The Executive Council decided to merge its Social Service Committee and its Committee on Interracial Cooperation, naming the new agency the "Christian Social Services Committee." That committee's first report to the Association, in 1971, stated that it "has become the umbrella program of our association for several effective ministries that have been a part of our association for many, many years." It asserted that the committee's main purpose was "to give assistance and guidance in Christian social ministries to the churches of our association." It affirmed the continuing work of the Baptist Center, cited youth and family services through the Juvenile Court and the Detention Home, and Hood's efforts to "revise and revive our Minister's Day in Juvenile Court Program."

Hood's annual reports to the Association reflect a consistent pattern of direct action. In 1973, for example, he summarized his own activities by saying:

> We work with Juvenile Court and Raleigh Partners (Big Brother type programs coordinated by Christian Social Ministries) to help youth in trouble, Raleigh Housing Workshop to help increase and improve housing for low income families, Raleigh Area Ministries to help people interdenominationally in all of Wake County, Wake Drug Action Incorporated, to help youth and adults having drug problems, the Community Coalition to help get candidates (on a non-partisan basis) elected who will put the consensus of people ahead of business, developer, or other special interest groups and work with the correctional institutions to help to rehabilitate people rather than punish

them. Served on the Advisory Board for Goals of Raleigh to help plan for and set realistic, yet progressive goals for the metropolitan area of Raleigh-Wake County. This is a citizens group concerned that our area grow more in quality of life and environment (planned growth) rather than size or population (unplanned growth).

Under Hood's direction the Christian Social Ministries Committee undertook two significant new activities. First, they maintained the chaplaincy program at North Hills Mall, in cooperation with the Baptist State Convention and the Home Mission Board. And second, they participated in the interdenominational "Minister's Day in Court," ministering to youth and their families.

After nearly three years on the job, Hood resigned in July, 1974, to become Director of the Pre-Release and After-Care Regional Office of the State Department of Corrections for the State of North Carolina. Six months later (January, 1975), Ann Wooten, who had been Director of the Baptist Center for four years, also resigned. With the title of "Director, Christian Social Ministries," on February 1, 1975, Mrs. Frances Jones was employed to replace Hood, but Wooten was not replaced.

These two resignations preceded the significant structural reorganization of the Association that currently was being planned, and that became effective in the fall of 1975. In that new structure, "Christian Life" was one of six commissions. Its three objectives were

Personal, spiritual, and moral growth after the images of Christ; developing a spirit of living out the Gospel in daily life; and confronting social issues cooperatively. The Commission shall:

a. Actively seek means whereby spiritual and personal growth may be fostered and coordinate such efforts with the Leadership Training Commission.
b. Help churches understand the meaning of total involvement in the Christian faith and how to express Christian love in a positive and tangible way.
c. Help the churches become more aware of the ethical implications of the Christian gospel with regard to such aspects of daily living as family life, human relations, moral issues, economic life, citizenship, and related areas.

d. Assist churches in identifying areas of human need and help promote cooperative ministries in such areas as non-readers, alcoholics, drug abusers, youth in trouble, poverty stricken, prisoners, probationers, emotionally disturbed and senior citizens.
e. Have general oversight of the Baptist Center and similar ministries....
f. Serve as a resource unit for churches who wish to broaden their concern and action in the area of its assignment. (*ByLaws, III-D*)

Meanwhile, it was becoming apparent that the needs which in the past had been met by the Baptist Center were increasingly being supplied by other agencies. Elwood Perry, chairman of the subcommittee on the Center, reported to the Executive Council on September 27, 1976, that "a thorough study had been made of the resources available to the residents of the Halifax Court area and that the Baptist Center was not needed as has been true in past years." On recommendation of the subcommittee, therefore, the Center was closed, the property sold, and the proceeds designated for other missions purposes.

While the new Christian Social Ministries Committee was defining itself and clarifying its objectives, Frances Jones carried on her own programs. In addition to working in and through the churches, she devoted a great deal of energy to community and governmental projects. In her 1977 report to the Association she said about her work:

> The Christian Social Ministries director serves as a liaison between churches, home, court and community agencies with the Raleigh Baptist Association. This has involved working with Raleigh Area Ministries, the Tenth Judicial District Juvenile Court, Youth Services, Wake County Detention Home, Wake County Mental Health, North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administrators, North Carolina Correctional Association and the Wake County Social Services Department. Written materials and audio-visuals were made available to our churches through the CSM office. Also, there were a total of 41 workshops and speaking engagements. The number of personal conferences for the year was 262. As a home missionary,

> I participated in three World Missions Conferences. Services, referrals and counseling were provided for families with food, clothing, housing, employment and fuel needs. Arrangements were made for 20 families to be assisted at Christmas.

Unfortunately, however, there were problems between Jones and Costner, for in a report given to the Executive Committee on June 29, 1978, Bill Puckett, chairman of the search committee for a new Superintendent of Missions, noted "the need for a study to be made concerning an improved relationship between the CSM director and the new director of missions, convention staff and Home Mission Board staff."

When Charles McMillan succeeded Costner in 1978, he found himself very much at home with the already-developing emphasis on social ministries. The Christian Life Commission was at work on family life activities, ministries in multi-family housing complexes, and summer programs for children in mobile parks, as well as increasing support for the Life Enrichment Center. In his first address to the Association, in the fall of 1979, McMillan demonstrated his passion for this broadening type of ministry by saying, "We must find a way to reach the 150,000 lost people in our area. We must find a way to reach the rich and poor—the language groups—singles—students—and others. We must find a way for churches to grow. We must find a way to stop the erosion of moral values. We must find a way to stop the tide of moral decadence."

In McMillan's early years with the Association, that work expanded significantly. For nearly two years the Missions and Outreach Commission had been investigating the need for a specialized ministry to the blind. In 1979 they reported to the Association that they had just held a "Blind Conference," and that the results were still being investigated. They added that "The ministry to blind people has become a joint project of the Raleigh Baptist Association and the Special Ministries section of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention." The Christian Life Commission reported in that same year that it had begun work on a multi-family housing ministry. The next year the Woman's Missionary Union spoke of its expanding work with women in prison. In 1981 the Leadership Training Commission reported on plans for a Seminary extension program at Central Prison in Raleigh.

Frances Jones continued to report regularly on her support of Associational activities such as literacy missions, youth and family

services, and church community weekday ministries and workshops on specialized topics such as sex education. She also reported her involvement with other volunteer and governmental agencies. In 1980, for example, she cited her work with the Raleigh Areas Ministries Urban Ministry task force, her work with the Wake County Local Migrant Council, and her supervision of a summer student worker in an apartment ministry in Cary. In 1982 she cited her work on "a strategy for a relief ministry for the poor," her membership on the Board of Directors of the Raleigh Area Ministry Urban Ministry Center, her training of English as a Second Language teachers, and her planning and supervising a day camp for underprivileged children.

When Jones resigned in the fall of 1982, no permanent replacement was employed because the Association was in the midst of its long-range planning study. Dennis Gabriel, a Southeastern Seminary student, however was employed on a part-time basis.

Planning for the Future

An important "Long-Range Strategy Report" was endorsed by the Association at its annual meeting on Thursday, October 29, 1982. The development of that report was long in the making. On February 27, 1979, just four months after he began his work with the Association, Charles McMillan had expressed to the Executive Committee his concern about "where we are in organizational structure."' At the next meeting of the Association, the Plans and Programs Commission reported that it had appointed a subcommittee to deal with "Long-Range Planning." In 1980 that subcommittee reported directly to the Association that it had held four meetings. Whether that subcommittee continued to function is unclear in the records. The minutes of the January 26, 1982 "Quarterly Associational Meeting" report that in that session there had been a vote to "appoint a Long-Range Strategy Planning Committee." At any rate, at the annual meeting of the Association on October 28, 1982, the Long-Range Strategy Committee submitted its final report.

Jim Burch, chairperson, presented the report and it was formally adopted by the Association. By way of introduction, the report described the purpose of the Association in terms of "linking congregations in cooperative ministries." Then it stated that the objectives of the Association

were (1) to improve communication between the churches, (2) to promote church growth and development and strengthening the churches, (3) to encourage and enable cooperative ministries, and (4) to promote relationships with the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The next section of the report is a summary of population changes and estimates of the anticipated growth of Wake County. It points both to the "rapidly aging characteristic" of the population and to the possibility that the nation may be in the middle of another "baby boom." Then, identifying specific growing areas of Wake County, the committee made four recommendations for the Association's programs for the future:

1. Any program must consider "the impact of both population *growth* and *decline* on the existing churches of the association.
2. "The association must be aware that while Wake County is experiencing economic *growth*, it is also seeing a growth in the numbers of people *below* the poverty level."
3. In light of growth, present and projected, it is "imperative that we begin the process of recovering the Baptist impact on our area immediately."
4. Because parts of the area of the association "are now characteristically like 'pioneer areas,'" we must use a pioneer strategy in planning our work.

That summary was followed by a report on what had happened to the churches during the previous ten years. First, they said, while our churches have grown during that time, their rate of growth had not kept up with the rate of growth of population in the county. While the county growth rate was 34%, that of the Baptists was only 12%. The county population had grown by 75,000, but the number of people in Baptist Sunday schools had grown by less than 1,000.

In terms of finances, the committee found that the churches were stronger than they were ten years ago, with receipts growing from five million dollars in 1972 to just over eleven million in 1981. The Association's income, however, had not increased proportionately. The programs of the association therefore did not grow significantly, and unless that situation changed the programs would suffer in the future. The committee therefore said that "The association needs to put more effort

into church program maintenance than it has in the past. To adequately do this, we have to communicate the importance of the association to our membership and make it clear that each church reaps a positive benefit from a well-funded association."

In light of both the demographic changes and the financial situation the committee recommended that the Association:

1. Develop a group of volunteers "to serve with selected county or private non-profit agencies."
2. Explore "formalized working agreements with the selected county or private non-profit agencies."
3. Continue to promote and facilitate "cooperative cluster relief ministries" and undertake a study in other communities in the county to determine feasibility of "a cooperative relief ministry of the churches in those communities."
4. Undertake as new work "Transportation to medical facilities for the elderly and handicapped; target Community Development neighborhoods (low income) or neighborhoods with teenage high crime rates and provide multiple ministries in the neighborhood and through families."
5. Select a suitable number of moral issues to address.
6. Develop an organization of Church Child Care directors.
7. Train membership of churches in Christian Social Ministry skills.
8. Encourage churches to establish "a committee structure responsible for church/community ministries to respond to human need."

Concerned with relationship of the Association to other religious groups in the area, the committee recommended that the Association

1. Continue to participate, and encourage churches to participate with other denominations in cooperative ministries such as the cooperative relief ministries, Raleigh Area Ministries and FIGS.
2. "... evaluate all participation in social programs to human need in terms of the use of Christian ministry methods and sound social work skills and practices. Programs should be designed to nurture redemptive helping relationships, be person centered, and provide opportunities for the expression of agape love."

3. "... have a volunteer coordination program for ministries that the association designates as priorities."

In the final section of the report, dealing with "Leadership Study," the committee concentrated on the almost unanimous concern for "unity and cooperation in the work of the Association." They noted that there was general agreement that the top priorities for the Association in the future should be:

1. Coordinate the activities of churches to promote cooperation.
2. Promote church growth and development.
3. Planning and program development.
4. Leadership Training.
5. Promote cooperative evangelism and new work.
6. Help churches meet real human needs.

Following this program, the committee said, "the association would be a unifying agent whose responsibility would include"

1. Communication of program opportunity and ideas.
2. Training leadership to carry out both the local church and associational missions.
3. The ongoing assessment of needs.
4. The implementation of creative association-wide programs in such areas as Christian Social Ministries, church starts, church development, and church fellowship.

The committee saw their proposals as consistent with the typical Southern Baptist Association, and expressive of the "strong commitment on the part of our membership to the association as a viable and operational part of the work of the local church." The central idea, they said, was *cooperation*.

By their approval of the recommendations coming from this careful study, the Association expressed a readiness to move forward to meet the challenge of a radically changing social situation.

Raleigh Baptist Association *Ministries Today*

Nueva Esperanza soccer ministry — June 2004

Chapter Five

Working with New Plans 1982–1993

The world changed rapidly and dramatically in the 1980s. Troubled by increasingly serious economic problems and growing unrest in a number of Republics, the Soviet Union was engaged in a struggle for survival—a struggle that would end with the dissolution of the Union in 1991. Both war and terrorist activity in the Middle East affected the American economy and threatened American security. The Arab-Israeli conflicts persisted. Poor, over-populated, and politically unstable African nations were struck by a devastating drought. Economic and political unrest in China provoked widespread and harsh repressive measures, particularly against students. Latin American nations were torn by revolution, and Western European nations struggled to strengthen economic and political ties.

Within that context of world-wide problems, the United States made a significant political shift. With the election of George H. W. Bush as President, power shifted from the Democrats to the Republicans. That shift, however, did not resolve the domestic problems that troubled the United States. The unemployment rate reached 10.8% in 1982, the highest since 1940. Ethnic minorities remained the most economically disadvantaged people in the nation. The national debt continued its climb, and difficulties with the Social Security program became more alarming. AIDS burst upon the scene in 1981, and when the HIV virus that causes it was identified in 1983 we launched a massive campaign to find ways of treating it and ultimately of preventing it. The space program suffered a set-back when the lives of six astronauts were lost in the explosion of the shuttle *Challenger* in January, 1986. Late in that same year

the national press began airing the Iran-Contra scandal involving the secret sale of arms to Iran by the United States. The tobacco industry was increasingly under fire. Corruption in business, industry, and politics was revealed to the public.

At the same time the United States was troubled by "wars and rumors of wars." In September, 1983, Marines were sent into Lebanon as part of an international peace-keeping force, and 241 of them died in October when a truck loaded with explosives crashed into their headquarters in Beirut. Also in October, U.S. forces were sent to Granada to overthrow a Marxist and pro-Cuba government that had seized power by a military coup. A TWA plane flying from Athens to Rome was hijacked in June, 1985, and one American was killed. We came close to war with Lybia in 1989, and in the same year, over the opposition of the Organization of American States, we sent soldiers into Panama to capture General Manuel Noriega, who was under U. S. federal indictment on drug charges. In 1990–1991 the United States led a UN-sanctioned coalition of nations to repel the invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi troops of Saddam Hussein.

Like politics and economics, religion in the United States changed. While church membership continued to grow, the rate of that growth was slower than in previous decades, and it did not keep up with the growth of the total population. In absolute numbers, in other words, while membership grew, the percentage of the population involved in religious activities declined. Much religious activity was not in the traditional churches, but in para-church organizations such as Christian Business Men's organizations and Christian Business Women's organizations, Bible-study groups, and student movements such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Inter-Varsity Fellowship. In addition, the television ministries of Oral Roberts, Jim Bakker, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggert, and a host of others involved millions of Americans.

In this setting, denominational identification became increasingly unimportant to people. Many church members who moved into a new community did not look for a church of their own denomination, but for one which, for a variety of reasons, they liked! While many factors were involved in defining what one liked in a church, the growing national division between a "conservative" viewpoint and a "liberal" one came to have major significance. That difference of mind-set and of stance was behind conflicting views on controversial issues such as abortion,

homosexuality, religion in the public schools, and the status of women.

Among Southern Baptists, the plan to gain control of the Southern Baptist Convention which had been launched in the late 1970s by Judge Paul Pressler and Rev. Paige Patterson proceeded on schedule, and by 1990 the takeover was complete. Belief in "biblical inerrancy" became the criterion for orthodoxy and the standard by which people were judged for membership on committees and boards. The character of all Convention agencies and institutions shifted. Unhappy with the changes, many churches affiliated themselves with a new organization of moderates, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Ultimately a significant number of those churches left the Southern Baptist Convention completely. Others, however, remained with the Convention and hoped that things could be changed.

In North Carolina there were people and churches on both sides of the division, but the Baptist State Convention managed to maintain its unity. It continued to serve all of the churches, and the churches continued to support its agencies and activities and institutions. The most difficult problem was the channeling of missions funds sent from the churches through the State Convention to support the broader denominational causes. The State Convention devised and implemented a plan by which it would follow the wishes of the local churches in sending their contributions either to the Southern Baptist Convention or to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Fortunately, the Raleigh Baptist Association was not torn by the controversy and was able to continue its own work without any serious problem.

Organization and Staff

The Long Range Plan which had been completed and adopted in 1982 was not intended to produce a major reorganization of the structure or work of the Association. Rather, as Charles McMillan said to the Association at its annual session in the fall of 1983, the process "helped us to rediscover and identify our associational objectives and goals." Observing that "It is no accident that the priority objective of the association is the continuing effort to build the associational fellowship," he added a statement that stresses the importance of the "business as usual" activities of the Association. Speaking of church development he said:

> One of these [*objectives*] is church development. This year we have given major emphasis to the enlargement of our Sunday Schools. We will continue to emphasize Sunday School growth and discipleship training will be given a place of priority as we try to establish and enlarge Church Training programs. Mission education and mission action will be fostered through the Brotherhood and the Woman's Missionary Union. Church music programs will be improved through associational workshops. Churches will have the opportunity to use team consultants from the association to help with any or all of the church programs.

While the regular reports of the commissions and committees and church programs do not always reflect new activities, they do demonstrate faithfulness and effectiveness in the normal work of the churches and the Association.

Before the Long Range Study was completed, a significant title change reflected an evolving function and growing importance of the office secretary. Beginning her work in 1969, Mrs. Raeford Conn had been "Office and Financial Secretary." In time her responsibilities had so increased that in 1977 she was given the assistance of another secretary who worked first part-time and then full-time. In 1980 Conn's title was changed to "Administrative Secretary." She resigned in 1989 and was succeeded by Lynn B. Johnson, who was given greater responsibility and called "Administrative Assistant." Johnson came to the Association from the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators, where she had been Administrative Secretary for four years. Married and the mother of two daughters, Johnson had worked both as a legal secretary and as an administrative secretary prior to coming with her husband to Wake County.

The implementation of the Long Range Plan entailed a significant realignment of responsibilities and the expansion of the staff. A first step in that direction was taken in 1982 by creating the Missions/Ministries Commission by merging the Mission and Outreach Commission and the Christian Life Commission. It would be correct to say, however, that for the next several years the functions of the old Christian Life Commission were neglected.

The next step was the reorganization and expansion of the staff. Mrs. Durward Jones, who had followed Roy Hood as Director of

Christian Social Ministries in 1975, had resigned at the end of 1981. For most of 1982, Dennis Gabriel, a student at Southeastern Seminary, had worked part-time with the Long Range Planning Committee. In 1983 he began part-time work with the newly-created Missions/Ministries Commission, and upon his graduation he became full-time.

The staff's work-load continued to increase. In an article in the June, 1985, issue of the Association's newsletter, *Outreach*, Charles McMillan stated the problem without proposing a solution. Noting the significant increase in church membership and in enrollment in the church organizations, he spoke of the changing population of the area and the challenge of planning for the work of the Association in the future. He said:

> At least one-third of the people coming into our area are people from the northeast, Midwest, and west. These are people who are well educated and in responsible positions. They are making an impact on our area. These folk are non-rural, non-Baptist, and non-southern. Our people have also become better educated, better paid, and more urban. There is a statistical correlation between the better educated, better paid areas and decreasing church attendance and involvement. Industrialization inevitably moves a society toward urbanization and then to secularization. North Carolina is in the unique position of being the tenth most populous state and yet the second most rural state. For the first time in 1984 over one-half of the population in N.C. lived in urban areas. As the people urbanize their values change. They no longer ask "Is it good?" or "Is it appropriate?" but "Will it work?" and "Is it effective?" and "Is it efficient?" Will we minister to people in our changing society? Help us plan for the next five years to be effective in teaching, discipling, and ministering to people.

Two months later, in the August, 1985, issue of *Outreach* McMillan said that he and Dennis Gabriel were in contact with real estate developers and city and town planners in an effort to stay abreast of the growth surge. He noted that "Just last week, 41 subdivisions were approved by the planning commission," and that such action occurred almost every week. Then he asked, "What will we do to try to manage this growth?"

One thing that the Association did was to create a new staff position. At its annual meeting in October, 1985, it passed a motion brought from

the Executive Committee by Jack Porter that a committee be appointed "to study the need for a position on the associational staff of a Church Development Director." Jo Ann Wright was employed in that position, and began her work on September 6, 1986. A graduate of Radford University in Virginia, she held an M.Div. in Religious Education from Southeastern Seminary. She had begun her career as a US-2 missionary appointee of the Home Mission Board, working at the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. Then, for seven years she had been Minister of Education/Music/Youth at Mt. Vernon Church.

Dennis Gabriel resigned from the position of Associate Director for Missions/Ministries in the spring of 1986. Before beginning its search, the committee appointed to find a successor prepared a carefully-written position description. They began with the statement that the "General Responsibility" was to provide leadership in church extension and caring ministries. Then they listed what they identified as the "Specific Responsibilities:"

1. To work with the Missions/Ministries Commission in planning and implementing programs.
2. To consult with local churches "to enable them to meet their mission/ministry goals."
3. To work with local churches and associational leadership "in determining the need for new churches and implementing the start of new churches and missions."
4. "To work with the leadership of the association in identifying and developing appropriate responses to pressing moral issues in our area."
5. To work with convention leadership at all levels in missions/ministries function.
6. To work with other denominations in missions/ministries functions.
7. To work with association staff to establish contact and fellowship with the churches.
8. To relate to the budget process in areas of missions/ministries.

After a long search, the committee recommended Roy A. Smith, who was then minister of education and youth at Crabtree Valley Church in Raleigh. A 1968 graduate of Clemson University, he had worked in

private industry for fifteen years. After leaving private industry, he earned an M.Div. in Religious Education from Southeastern Seminary. He had been on the staff at Crabtree Valley Church for four years before he began his work with the Association in 1987.

Aware of the growing needs, the Executive Committee conducted a careful study of the staffing situation in 1988. At their June meeting Steve Bolton, chairman of the budget committee, spoke about the prospect of adding another position in the next year. The idea was that the work of the Director of Missions/Ministries be divided between two people—one who would be responsible for church expansion and one who would work with church and community ministry. Both the Home Mission Board and the Baptist State Convention would help finance the expansion, and one church in the Association had promised to contribute $5,000 per year toward the new position. In August a committee was elected to work out the details of dividing the responsibilities. It was understood that the work of the Mission/Ministries Commission would be divided into three categories: (1) Poverty, family and other social needs, (2) Church Extension, and (3) Evangelism.

The new position was actually created in 1989, when Roy Smith was made Associate Director for Church Extension and Language. The other position was not filled until the Personnel Committee had written a job

Crabtree Valley Baptist Church

description and a search was conducted. In the April, 1989, issue of the *Outreach* the search committee announced that they would nominate "a highly qualified and experienced Church/Community Director" whose experience and "track record is second to none in the S.B.C." They added, "If approved, this addition will give us the finest associational staff anywhere (present writer excepted), and will lift us to a new level of expertise and ability." This highly-touted nominee, Marsha E. Cook, was welcomed at the June quarterly meeting of the Association. She held a B.S. from the University of Missouri (1965) and an M.R.E. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1969). She had worked in Christian Social Ministries in St. Joseph, MO, Gadsden, AL, and Wilmington, NC. The committee said:

> She is considered one of the premier Directors of Christian Social Ministries in the Southern Baptist Convention, having served twenty years with the Home Mission Board as a Home Missionary. She has been recognized repeatedly for her creative use of ministry programs in sharing the gospel and reaching people for Christ.

When Cook began her work, in July, 1989, the staff of the Association consisted of a Director of Missions, three Associate Directors, an Administrative Assistant, and an Associate Secretary. Another staff increase—a temporary one—came in 1991 when Angie Lowery began a two-year stint as a US-2 Missionary.

The involvement of women in the organizational structure of the Association continued to increase during this era, though full equality was not achieved. In 1986 the Director of Missions was a man, the Associate Director was a woman, and the two secretaries were women. On the Executive Council were three women and seven men. Seventeen women served with forty-two men on the five Commissions, and three women served with eighteen men on the three Committees. About forty percent of the messengers to the annual session of the Association were women. In addition, three of the fourteen persons recommended for ordination were women. In 1993 the staff consisted of four men and one woman, while there were eight men and four women on the Executive Committee. Seventy-one men and sixteen women served on the ten Commissions and Committees. In that year five persons were recommended for ordination, of whom one was a woman.

The Churches

Before 1982 the lead in establishing new churches had been the responsibility of the Secretary of Missions and the Missions Committee. That did not change until the employment of Dennis Gabriel as Director of Missions/Ministries. In his first written report to the Association in October, 1984, he reported the statement of purpose which guided the work of the Missions/Ministries Commission:

> (1) To encourage inter-church and inter-denominational cooperation in ministry, (2) to identify areas of ministry that need special long-term attention and recruit a "Special Purpose" church to meet that particular need—i.e. literacy, (3) To identify areas of need that must rely on the entire association to accomplish—i.e. food drives, and (4) To encourage every church in the association to be a ministry in its *own community*.

In the rest of his report Gabriel talked about the "procedure for starting new churches" which had been implemented in 1984. Whereas Jones had concentrated on social ministries, he worked primarily with local congregations and in planning for the establishment of new churches.

In approving the "Long Range Plan" in the Fall of 1983, the Association set a goal of starting three new churches a year for the next five years. In short order the Ministries/Missions Commission established a procedure for achieving that goal.

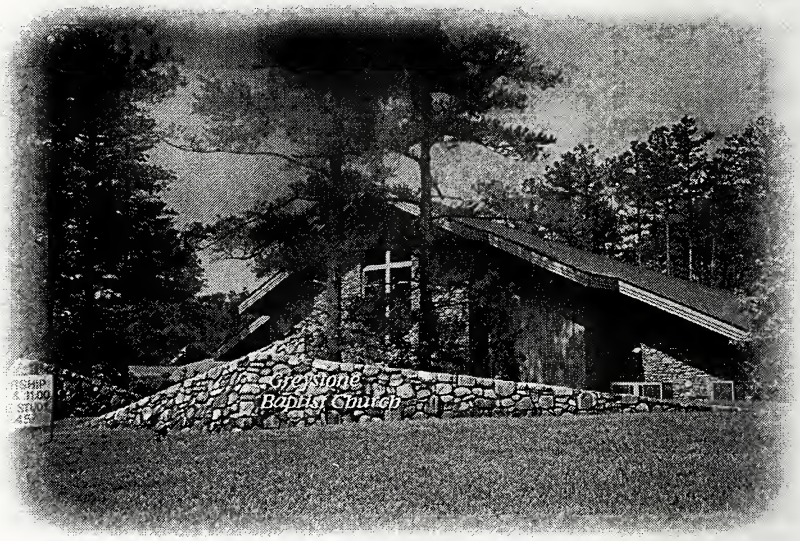
> There will be three levels of new work sponsorship: (1) the sponsor who will be the church of record and the constituting fellowship, (2) The partner church will share the cost of new work start with the sponsor and will also share the supervision, and (3) The covenant church that shares the dream of the new work in prayer and other short term assistance.

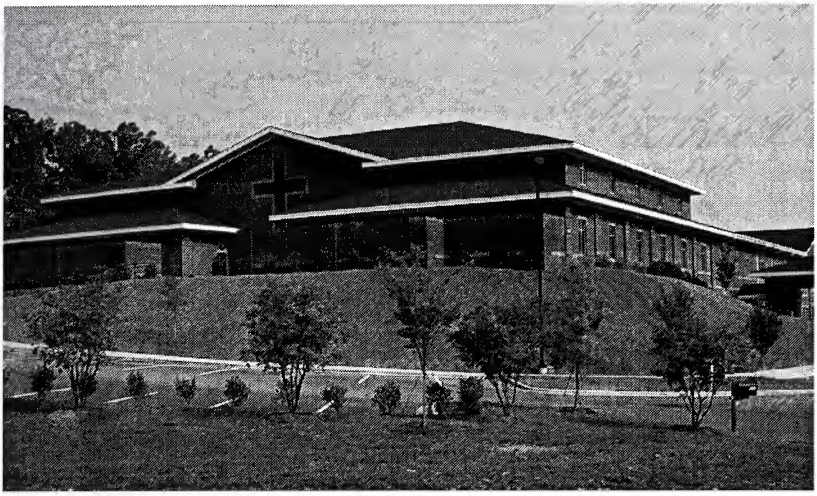
McMillan and Gabriel took the lead, working together to identify likely locations for new churches. Writing in the *Outreach* for August, 1985, McMillan described the way they were going about the task.

> For the past several weeks Mr. Gabriel and I, along with area pastors, have been meeting with real estate developers and city or town planners as we try to assess groups in the various parts of our association. Just last week, 41 subdivisions were approved by the planning commission. Each will have an average of 50 houses with about 225 people. These are statistics that are repeated over and over almost every week. Our county is on the grow! It has been for several decades and certainly will continue for several more. What will we do to try to manage this growth? How shall we reach out to the new people coming in? One of the most effective ways is by starting new churches.

The goal of three churches a year; however; proved to be unrealistic. Four churches were organized in 1984 (Baptist Christian Fellowship, Faith and Inspiration, Greystone, and New Covenant Life), but none in 1985, none in 1986, one in 1987 (United African), and none in 1988. During the next five years the pace was to remain about the same. One

Greystone Baptist Church





Westwood Baptist Church

new church (North Wake) was established in 1989, two (Fairview and Vision) in 1990, none in 1991, two in 1992 (Olde Mount Vernon and Westwood), and none in 1993. Seven of the ten were still active in the Association in 2005. Another was listed as a member church in 2005, but it had made no report to the Association. The names of the other two do not appear on the list.

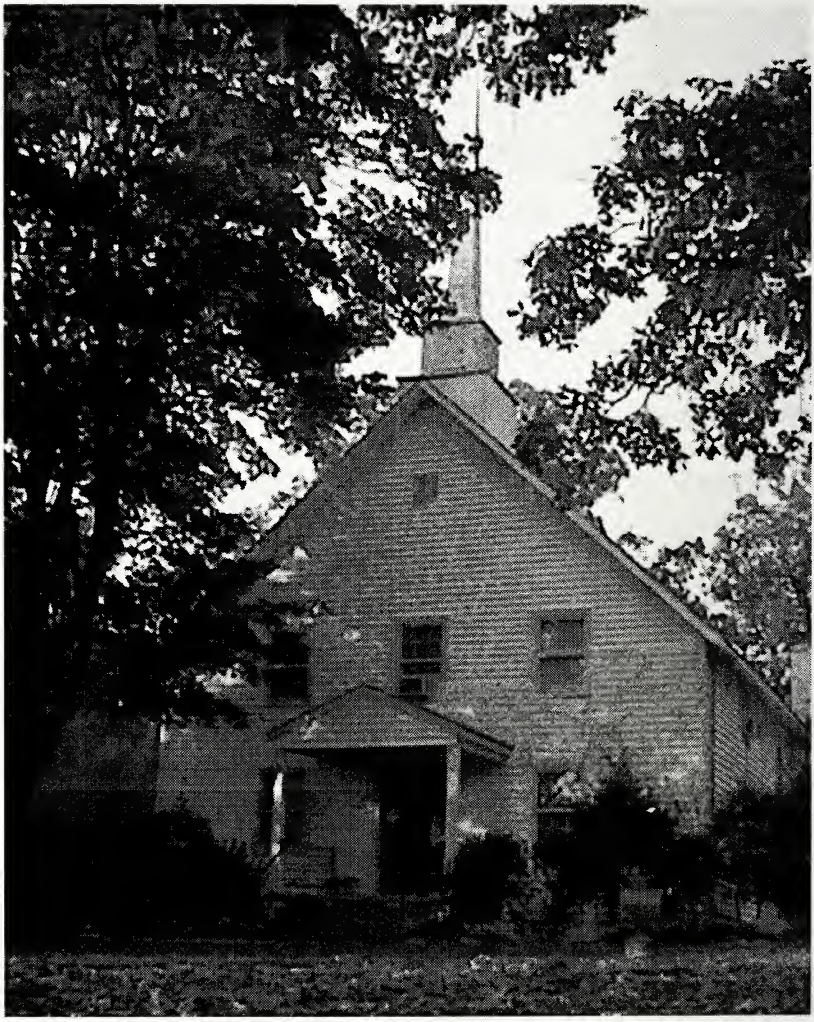
The total number of churches in the Association increased from eighty-eight in 1982 to one hundred and twelve in 1993. During that period total membership in the churches increased by approximately 5,000, growing from 49,423 to 54,547. The rate of increase in average attendance in Sunday school, however, was significantly lower, rising by less than three thousand, from 15,485 to 18,329.

Reflecting the change in practice and terminology in the Southern Baptist Convention during this period, the term "Church Planter" began to appear in the records of the Association. The first occasion was in Dennis Gabriel's "New Work Update" at the fall, 1983, meeting of the association: "Ideally we would like to pick an area to work and hire a Church Planter to come to our association on a full-time basis to begin work." At the June 28, 1988, meeting of the Executive Committee it was noted that church planting was not growing as rapidly as needed.

And at the Executive Committee meeting on September 26, 1989, Roy Smith commented on the difficulties of the Fairview mission, saying that among other things "plans bogged down in calling church planter."

The increasing heterogeneity of the population of the area expressed itself in widely varying religious views and ways of worship, often with

Olde Mount Vernon Baptist Church



little attention to denominational traditions and historic beliefs and practices. Indeed, some churches avoided choosing names that reflected denominational identity. Inevitably, therefore, there were wide differences not only among people who joined existing churches but also among those who established new ones. Some differences were so significant that in the long run they could affect the work of the Association. This matter troubled the Mutual Care Commission's Credentials Committee in its consideration of the New Covenant Life Church in 1982. A group from Mount Olivet Church had begun a mission in Knightdale in March, 1981, and had constituted themselves as a church in February, 1982. After commending the church for its efforts, the Committee added the request that "the church and its leadership give serious thought to its style of church government and how that relates to *The Baptist Faith and Message*, Article VI: *The Church*. We further encourage the church to continue its work of formulating a Constitution and Bylaws including Articles of Faith."

Apparently such considerations continued to be a problem, for in their 1984 report to the Association, the Credentials Committee addressed it directly. Because they had some question about one of the four churches which they were recommending for Watchcare membership, they explained what that relationship meant:

> During this period of watchcare the churches listed above will have an opportunity to participate in the programs and activities of the Association, and to become familiar with the Baptist Faith and Message, the missions and ministries program, and the structure of our association, the Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. The churches in question can then determine if they wish to be cooperating members of the Association and participate in the Conventions. The Association will also have the opportunity to observe the churches' participation and cooperation in these programs and activities. While the committee does not wish to make either the Baptist Faith and Message or traditional Baptist polity a test of fellowship, these are the distinctives on which identity as a Baptist church is determined.

That paragraph was followed by a statement of "Specific Facts and Recommendations" for each of the four churches.

Differences of belief and practices continued to be an issue, however. In its October, 1988, report to the Association the Mutual Care Commission prefaced its statement by the observation that "The Commission (among other things) has been assigned the task of informing and explaining the nature and functions of our association and to identify and communicate our Baptist distinctives—and to provide mutual understanding and fellowship among our churches." Two years later, only after probing the Vision Baptist Church's "purpose, organizational structure and ministry," did the Commission recommend that that group be accepted under watchcare. And in 1993 the Commission reported they had been discussing "the need for a forum for the presentation of theological issues, the church in particular." To help meet that need, they had planned a "Dialogue on the Theology of the Church" to which all pastors, staff, and interested persons had been invited.

But the failure to keep pace with the growing population continued to trouble the Association. Roy Smith, Associate Director for Church Extension and Language, commented in the fall of 1989 that "Starting three new churches per year will merely allow us to break even with population growth." During the next five years, 1989 through 1993, another eight churches became members of the Association. In addition, many much-needed language missions were established, some of which ultimately became churches, some of which continued as missions for many years, and some of which dissolved when they were no longer needed. In addition to establishing churches, there was an ongoing ministry to migrants, among whom it was virtually impossible to create a continuing, identifiable congregation. If success is measured only in terms of establishing permanent, independent congregations, therefore, then the 1989 goal of three new churches a year for five years was not achieved. If success is measured in terms of a meaningful ministry to people, then the achievements were outstanding.

There was one unusual accession to the Association in 1990. On May 29 of that year Charles McMillan reported to the Executive Committee that "we have our first real possibility of a Black Church asking about affiliation with RBA." A short time later members of the Mutual Care Commission met with representatives of the Progressive Baptist Church, a black congregation with about 75 members. They were impressed with the church's "commitment to missions, evangelism, and care ministries." The congregation, which met on the campus

of St. Augustine's College but already had a lot on Rock Quarry Road, planned to be dually aligned with the General Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. At its quarterly meeting on July 31, the Association approved the Commission's recommendation that the church be accepted under watchcare.

As we have seen, the diversity in the new churches raised questions about the compatibility of some with the Association. New Covenant Life, for example, which was organized in the early 1980s (the dates indicated in the *Annuals* vary) sent letters to the Association only in 1986 and 1987, but remains on the list of member churches to the present. For another example, in response to a request for membership from the Vision Baptist Church, the Commission met with their representatives on November 9, 1990. "After some question regarding Vision's purpose, organizational structure and ministry were satisfactorily answered," the Commission agreed to accept the church under watchcare and to recommend full membership at the annual meeting of the Association.

It was not only the practices of the new churches, however, that tested the willingness of the Association to accept diversity. In February, 1992, after almost a year of consideration of the issue, Pullen Memorial Church declared its full acceptance of gay and lesbian Christians into its membership and its endorsement of holy unions for homosexual couples. The March, 1992, issue of *Outreach* carried an article by Charles McMillan which had been written before the church had made its decision but which did not reach the Association until afterward. In an effort to maintain unity, McMillan said:

> The relationships between associational family members (churches) have been stretched in the past several years as the beliefs and practices of various family members have been in controversy to the beliefs of other family members. We now find ourselves potentially in a conflict of beliefs with a sister church as she struggles to make a decision concerning a request to bless a homosexual union. We all acknowledge the right of each autonomous church to make any decision it deems right and proper. We also recognize that what one member church does and believes impacts the entire family of churches. Pullen Baptist Church has and is struggling with its collective conscience to determine its response to the request of one of its

members. Its decision will be forth coming in the next few weeks. In the meantime the association of churches considers its response to the situation. While the church struggles with its decision, let the member churches join in prayer for this family member that God's will may be done. Once the decision is rendered let us find ways of responding that are mature and Christian. If it should be reported in the news media that I personally had committed some terrible deed, I would hope that my fellow Baptists would not sit in judgment on me until they had entered into dialogue with me in order that their information might be accurate and adequate. Reported and written descriptions provide only a small portion of the total communication that can occur when we talk with someone, observe their body language, listen to the tone of their conversation and experience the language of the spirit. It is appropriate therefore for the Mutual Care Commission to arrange one or more dialogue sessions with members of the Pullen congregation and individuals from other member churches who may wish to participate. In these sessions individuals can seek information, express feelings and concerns, and in general share with each other on a personal level. Hopefully from these sessions can come suggestions that will provide the basis for a mature and caring response.

None of us, including the members of Pullen, asked for this issue to come up. However, it is with us and maybe, just maybe, if we can deal with this conflict appropriately, we can learn how to deal with some of our other conflicts and be better for it.

May the will of God be known and done.

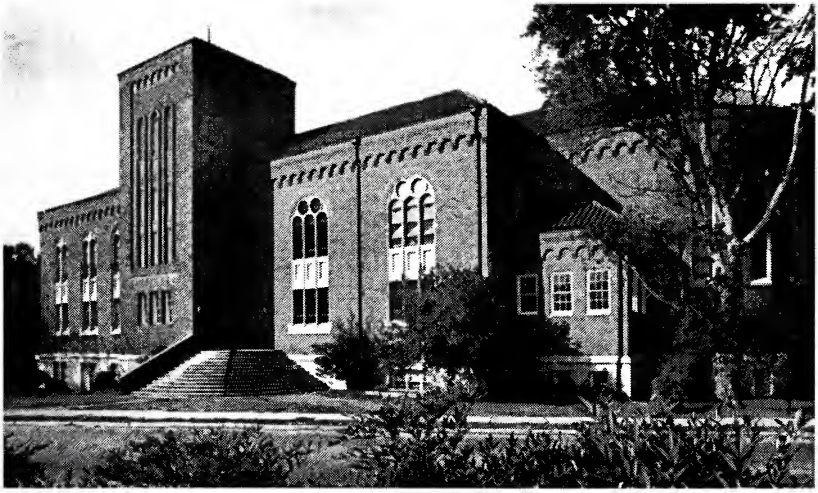
Shortly after Pullen took its action, McMillan released a statement disapproving of their position, and the Executive Committee issued a statement of disapproval on March 4. The sentence that preceded the Committee's statement said their resolution was adopted by "the majority of the members present and voting." Their concluding sentence, however, said that "This resolution was passed unanimously by the Executive Committee in a closed meeting on March 4, 1992." The unanimity of the vote, therefore, is in question. At any rate, an effort was

made to get Pullen's pastor, Mahan Siler, to ask the church to withdraw from the Association. His response, however, was that he would not do that because neither he nor the church had a problem with the Association. Consequently a called meeting of the Association was held at First Baptist Church in Cary on May 5. By a strong majority vote, the Association withdrew fellowship from Pullen.

In the June issue of *Outreach* McMillan made no direct reference to the Association's action, but he did have an article in which he urged the Association to get on with its work. The Mutual Care Commission, however, did speak to the action in its report to the Association in October. After reviewing the process which they had followed, they stated that the "doctrinal dialogue on the issue of homosexuality" which it had held "serves as a model for future dialogues on doctrinal issues."

From time to time churches within the Association needed help of one sort or another. In his report in the *1984 Annual*, McMillan said that progress was being made "in the area of revitalizing declining churches and beginning new work. Existing churches have demonstrated more openness and desire to support missions and other new work. Ministry programs, particularly those with migrants and the rural poor have been greatly enlarged and generously supported by our churches." An article

Pullen Memorial Baptist Church



in the September, 1988, *Outreach* spoke of concern about churches that were declining in membership and announced an upcoming visit by a consultant from the Home Mission Board

In light of the continuing problem of conflict between pastor and people, pastor and staff members, and staff and church members, the Mutual Care Commission tried to find ways to lend support to the pastors. In 1985 they organized a Pastors' Conference which they hoped would both serve as a support group and offer the pastors the opportunity for more contact outside their own congregations. It began with 40 pastors in attendance, but after some months average attendance declined significantly. In 1987 Charles McMillan began a type of "pastoral care" for the pastors by visiting them on a regular basis. And, in light of the conflict within the Southern Baptist Convention, the Commission planned a retreat in the spring of 1988 to bring together for free discussion ministers with different theological backgrounds.

But the results of the efforts to resolve conflict were not always good. At the meeting of the Executive Committee on February 20, 1990, it was reported that "two pastors have been terminated since January," and that both the pastors and the churches needed prayer. In an *Outreach* column in July, 1990, McMillan said:

> A 1988 study of Southern Baptist Churches reveals that 116 ministers are forced to resign each month in the Southern Baptist Convention. This is up from 88 per month indicated by a similar survey made in 1984. The North Carolina Baptist State Convention has provided $147,626.00 since 1986 for Baptist ministers forced to resign in North Carolina. 116 ministers have received help during this period.

Then, without reference to any specific situation, McMillan expressed his own views on coping with the problem.

The level of concern was high, however. On August 27, 1991, McMillan informed the Executive Committee of a program at Southeastern Seminary designed to helped assist ministers who have been terminated. He said that housing for the institute was available at the seminary, and that the Seminary hoped "to add to this program medical assistance, counseling, education, and career assessment." He commented that "about nine ministers a month are terminated in North Carolina." At the annual session of the Association in the fall of that year,

Jerry Hayner included in his report for the Mutual Care Commission the statement that "The Commission has been concerned about ways to work with churches and ministers to forestall the dissolution of their relationship by providing a counseling team that could work with each. Termination of ministers is a problem that disturbs the ministers and churches alike."

Special Ministries

In addition to starting new churches, the Missions/Ministries Commission was charged to give attention to "special purpose" needs. When the Commission made its first report at the 1983 annual meeting of the Association, they confessed to being a bit uncertain as to what direction to take on that charge. By the time they gave their next report in the fall of 1984, however, their uncertainties had disappeared. Saying that they had "managed to break new ground in associational work," they cited a new language fellowship of Asian Indians, new language tutoring programs, and a new ministry to people in crisis. Then they turned to a matter that subsequently was to demand a great deal of attention—the mushrooming of the number of migrant workers (both legal and illegal) in Wake County. Aware of the great social and spiritual needs of those workers, the Commission had responded to the situation. Evaluating their efforts, they pronounced it a success:

> Church response was overwhelming. Enormous amounts of food, clothing, "Do Me" Books, and health care kits were distributed. Many churches for the first time contemplated and provided migrant ministry. However, mistakes were made and much is needed to make this program a truly successful one. While the food program was successful, the Adopt a Camp Program only scratched the surface. Facilitating health care has only just begun and attempts to sustain and create worship opportunities need to be improved.

Plans were under way to recruit volunteers for the coming year, they added, and a migrant council of people with experience in working with migrants was being formed to give more direction to the program.

In the years that followed, the annual reports of the Missions/Ministries Commission cited specific programs and activities designed to minister to the needs of the transient and economically insecure people. In 1986, for example, they said that "The lack of rain, and therefore crops to harvest, has left many migrants without work and hungry. More than 300 food bags have already been distributed. In addition, literacy programs for migrants have been set up at five locations utilizing some teachers from Wake Tech along with our own Baptist personnel." In 1987 they reported that

> Over 400 bags of groceries were distributed. Several people were transported to and from medical appointments. One vision screening was held with 10 of 31 participants needing a follow-up eye examination. Conversational English classes were offered at Fuquay-Varina, Rolesville, and Salem. As usual, many of the migrants are singles or men here without their families. However, more family units were ministered to than in previous years.

In 1988, Roy Smith, Associate Director for Missions/Ministries reported that the migrant ministry was growing, saying that food and Bible distribution had taken place in four areas, English as a Second Language had been taught in three areas, and significant evangelistic work had been done. In 1991, Marsha Cook, who was then Associate Director for Church and Community Ministries, reported on English classes held for migrants and worship services being held for them and concluded with the statement that "Over 500 food bags and hygiene kits were provided by RBA churches, all but 25 or 30 were given out by August."

Not all of the newcomers from other countries, however, were transient and economically insecure. Many were "immigrants" rather than "migrants." The stream of legal immigrants into Wake County which had begun soon after the end of World War II developed into a flood in the 1980s. They came from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America. They came as students or as employees in good positions. They settled in homes which they rented or owned and established themselves as responsible members of society. But their cultural background was different and they felt more "at home" with people like themselves. In addition, although some were fluent in English, many were not. While the established churches were happy to have them in their midst, they

were more likely to prefer a church which reflected their ethnic identity.

The Missions and Ministries Commission, therefore, undertook work with the different language groups. The Asian Indian Fellowship, meeting at Pullen Memorial, was the first, begun in 1984. The Commission's 1986 report highlighted the language ministries, which included Arab, Asian Indian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish. An African congregation began meeting at Forest Hills in 1988. In 1991 Forest Hills began a Chinese Bible Study group, and a Filipino ministry was begun by Mount Vernon. In that year, the Commission reported, Association churches were sponsoring a total of nine language mission congregations. The next year the Associate Director for Church Extension and Language Ministry listed currently-active language ministries for African (Forest Hills), Arabs (Trinity), Asian Indians (Providence), Chinese (Chinese Christian), Deaf (Hayes Barton), Japanese (Raleigh First), Korean (Cary First), Spanish (New Hope), Vietnamese (Mt. Vernon), and Filipino (Mt. Vernon). In 1993 the Chinese group was missing from the list, but a second Spanish congregation was meeting at Greenwood Forest, and Forest Hills was planning for a Portuguese Bible study group.

A comprehensive list of the other special ministries undertaken during this era by the Commissions, the Staff, and the traditional church organizations is impossible to make. Family life programs were common; educational and leadership training programs were offered the churches; help was given to communities in times of natural disaster; prison programs were established; ecumenical and governmental agencies cooperated; chaplaincy programs for commercial and recreational areas were provided; and issues of social concern were addressed. In addition to describing his work with the churches and missions, Roy Smith listed many other activities in which he and the Commission participated in 1988: a Christmas Toy Ministry for poor children, a growing migrant ministry, an expansion of the State Fair Ministry, work with homelessness and poverty, work with Emmaus House following a fire, work with the Ark Shelter Overflow program, a pre-retirement workshop, and a deaf Mission.

Smith and his Commission, of course, had no monopoly on such activities. In 1991 Marsha Cook, who had recently become Associate Director for Church and Community Ministries, included in her list of activities "Giving Tree"—for the Christmas season, Hunger and CROP Walks, a housing seminar, literacy programs, health programs, migrant

Japanese Group at Praise and Worship of the Nations Service

work, summer missions, single adult ministries, senior adult ministries, teen pregnancy prevention, a human sexuality seminar, marriage enrichment programs, work with the deaf, and work with the mentally challenged.

Although the Association paid attention to the demographic changes in Wake County and tried to establish new churches in strategic areas of growth, not until 1990 did it turn attention to the large multi-family residential complexes. In an article in *Outreach* for June of that year, Charles McMillan announced that the Association had joined the Triangle Apartment Association and was contacting apartment managers about mission possibilities. Saying that "Opportunities abound!" he added that, unfortunately, there were no successful models for that kind of ministry, and that the Association would have to make its own way.

Roy Smith, Associate Director of Church Extension and Language Ministry, reported to the Executive Committee on August 29, 1990, that the management of nearly all the apartment complexes he had contacted "will allow us to publicize programs and events in their recreation rooms, laundry rooms and place articles in their monthly newsletters

to tenants. We have been invited to do events for children, singles, and senior adults." A year later he reported to the Association that the "Multi-Family Housing Ministry was a stunning success and continues to grow." He had found that nearly a third of the families in the area lived in such housing, but that only five percent of those families belonged to a church. During the past summer, he said, four people had "led several East Raleigh churches ... in a ministry to the children and senior adults of Casa Grande-Melvid Court." The apartment manager reported afterward "immediate improvement in the resident attitudes and dramatic decreases in trash, vandalism, and crime." A number of churches were working in other apartment areas, he said. In the spring of 1992 a "Multi-Housing Task Force" was formed, and at the annual session in October Smith named eleven complexes in which work was done by eleven churches. In addition, the Association had held "Back Yard Bible Clubs" in two complexes. "The task force will soon be sharing information of specific multihousing communities near many of our churches," he said. "They will share this with each specific church. Expect a contact from them soon!"

Backyard Bible Club

Working with the Denomination

Never has there been any question about the relationship of the Raleigh Baptist Association with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Southern Baptist Convention. Between 1945 and 1982 the records reflected a constant awareness of and capitalizing upon that relationship. Throughout most of the 1980s, however, while there was no hint of alienation or separation, there was a near silence about the larger denominational organizations. The records reflect no debate on the issues which were dividing the Southern Baptist Convention. The Association followed the denominational programs, particularly those having to do with evangelism, without saying much about the Conventions themselves. It was almost as if the Conventions and the Association had their own responsibilities which they fulfilled independently without feeling any need for each other.

Almost, but not quite. In 1983 a movement was under way to sell the Fort Caswell property which the Baptist State Convention had acquired in the 1950s and developed as an assembly grounds. The Raleigh Association joined many other people who objected to that proposal and at its Quarterly Meeting on April 26, 1983, passed a resolution to that effect, sending it to the President of the Convention, the Chairman of the Convention's Executive Committee, the chief Executive of the Convention, and the editor of the *Biblical Recorder*.

Another exception was occasioned by the 1983 application for membership from some churches whose theology and ecclesiology seemed to be somewhat different from the traditional Southern Baptist position. The Association requested that those churches examine the Baptist Faith and Message statement, as well as "the missions and ministries program, and the structure of our association, the Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention."

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the Association was compelled to give attention to the conflict within the Southern Baptist Convention and its impact upon the Baptist State Convention. We have observed that during this era the denomination was seriously divided by the ultimately successful effort to gain control of the Convention by a group whose rallying cry was "Biblical inerrancy." As the battle raged in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina attempted to maintain a fellowship in which people of differing

theological perspectives could cooperate in the work of the denomination. Specifically, cooperation was defined as making contributions for the support of the mission activity of the Convention. In *Outreach* for December, 1987, Charles McMillan commented in his usual "upbeat" manner about the situation in the state: "My impression of the State Convention is that we have a new opportunity to build the trust necessary to use our vast resources to reach and win the world that challenges us."

Even as he spoke, however, the campaign of the inerrantists to gain control of the Southern Baptist Convention was approaching its successful conclusion. They had gained a majority on the board of trustees of Southeastern Seminary and were adopting policies that would bring about a complete turnover in the faculty and administration. President Randall Lolley announced his resignation in November, 1987, to be effective at the end of the academic year. Before he left office the trustees had named Lewis Drummond to be his successor. At their March 19, 1988, meeting the Executive Committee of the Raleigh Baptist Association voted to send a letter of appreciation to Randall Lolley and a letter of welcome to the new President, Lewis Drummond.

While the conflict raged in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina struggled to maintain a unity that incorporated people and churches of varying perspectives. Charles McMillan hoped and believed that the effort was successful. Reflecting on the spirit of the meeting of the State Convention in the fall of 1988, at the very moment when the changes were taking place at Southeastern Seminary, he said:

> I sensed that some of the walls between Baptists were coming down in Fayetteville. I hope that is true. Every North Carolina Baptist should hear Roy J. Smith's [*not to be confused with Roy A. Smith of the Raleigh Association*] message. It is a word for our times. There are indeed three challenges that face us: the plateauing of our churches, the loss of our enthusiasm for our mission and the controversy. It does impair our program, impede our mission and imperil the future of Baptists. (*Outreach*, December, 1988)

In that spirit, the State Convention had adopted a plan that allowed the local churches to designate their missions offerings for the Southern

Baptist Convention, for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, or for both. That plan, however, did not please everyone. McMillan reported to the Executive Committee on August 29, 1990, that some churches were holding funds in escrow, and some were cutting off funds to the Association while they were cutting funds to the Cooperative Program. He added that "At the last Pastors' Conference it was discussed that the Association will be affected by this new organization and decisions will need to be made how to remain inclusive for all our churches in the association. We do not know what the outcome is to be." Six months later, however, when Jerry Hayner asked in the Executive Committee meeting how the Association had been affected, the response was that, although there had been a significant change at the State level, the Association itself had not been affected.

At the next meeting of the Executive Committee, on March 26, Charles McMillan mentioned another potential problem: "If SEBTS [*Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary*] loses their accreditation our language students will lose their Visa. Which will probably be the end of our international students."

Inevitably, the work of the Association was indeed affected by the situation in the Southern Baptist Convention. In a September 29, 1993 message to the Association Charles McMillan identified two religious changes which he considered significant: "A population growing steadily less Christian (the fastest growing group today in America is the religiously unaffiliated)" and "The epidemic dissatisfaction and distrust of ministerial leadership." Then he spoke directly about the denomination, saying:

> Regardless of our individual position on the theological spectrum, the denominational controversy has shaken Baptists to the very foundations of our once proud (maybe too proud) institutions and agencies. Suspicion of brother and sister Baptist has supplanted trust, and doubt of the future has robbed us of the energy of confidence.

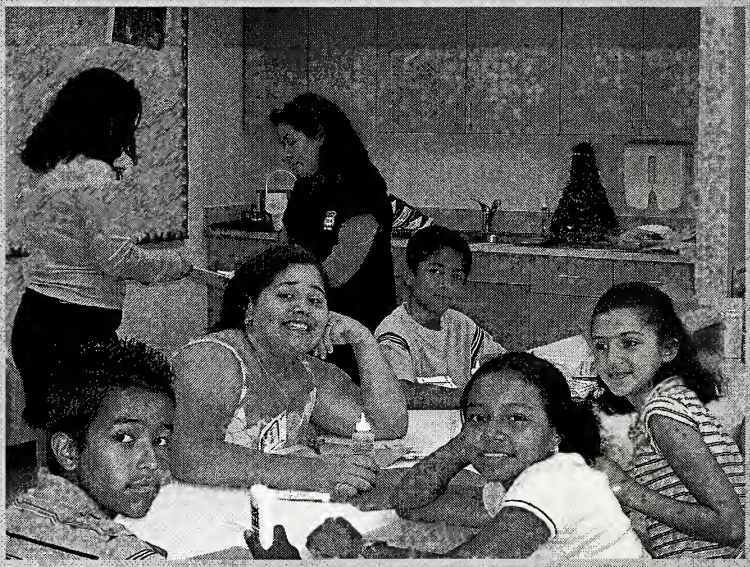
For the Raleigh Baptist Association, the early 1990s posed the question, "What's next?" In a period of eleven years the population of the area had grown by more than 75,000, and it was expected to increase by an even greater number in the next decade. The number of churches in the Association had increased from 88 in 1982 to 112 in 1993. In

its growth it had welcomed churches which did not fit the traditional Southern Baptist pattern. It had explored a wide variety of new types of mission ministry. The number of persons on the staff had fluctuated as the Association attempted to keep abreast of social and demographic changes: there were four persons on the staff in 1983, eight in 1991, and five in 1993. The Association had had the traumatic experience of excluding one of its member churches. And it had been troubled by the dissension within the denomination.

But it was time to begin to look to the future. While Charles McMillan had given wise and strong leadership to the Association since November, 1978, he felt that he was not the right person to take the lead in making a new plan of action. In June of 1993, therefore, he informed the Executive Committee that he planned to retire, and in the August issue of *Outreach* he made his announcement to the Association at large. He began his statement by announcing that a "Mission Direction 2000" was being formed, He said, "I am personally convinced that God is doing a new work among us and churches and associations must adapt programs and activities to what He wants to accomplish." Then he spoke of his own plans:

> There is a tendency for each of us to develop methods and practices in our work. That has been true for me and it is hard for me to give up some of those methods that have been so productive even though times have changed and God is doing a new work. As the Association moves into a new century it is important that it have a leader without the baggage of the past. It is also very true that God has been doing a new work in my heart and life. I have never been more sure than today that He is leading me to a new challenge. I do not know the specifics of that at this date but there are many indications that God wants me free to follow him. *In order to be faithful to Him and to free the Association to restructure itself for a new day, I hereby submit my resignation as the Director of Missions for the Raleigh Baptist Association effective no later than February 28, 1994. God has been good to me and my family in this relationship and I thank each and every one who has been a part of this ministry.*

Raleigh Baptist Association *Ministries Today*



Vacation Bible School class at Nueva Esperanza — July 2005

Chapter Six

Incorporating Diversity 1994–2005

"No one steps in the same river twice," said the ancient philosopher Heraclitus. In the last decade of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st things seemed to be changing so rapidly that no one could step into the same river even once! When the Soviet Union finally dissolved in 1991 the United States was left as the only superpower in the world, and it seems not to have known what to do with that power. Confronted in a new way with the desperate economic and chaotic political situations of peoples around the world, we moved from one international crisis to another without any well-defined objective and without a coherent plan. We found ourselves suspected by other nations, under attack from terrorist groups, and inundated with waves of immigrants, legal and illegal. We believed in the United Nations, we worked with it—but we did not trust it. And the world, in turn, was frustrated by our ambivalence.

Our nation might have been able to cope with the international situation better had we not had such serious domestic problems. Although we were the wealthiest nation in the world, we demonstrated the truth of Jesus' statement that "The poor you always have with you." The rates fluctuated, but we always had an embarrassing number of unemployed and under-employed people. We did not know how to provide good health care for all of our people, equal educational opportunity for all our people, justice in the courts for all our people. We did not know how to cope with increasing substance abuse, with the increase of violence in our society, with threats to the family. We were baffled by the revelations of sexual abuse by hosts of people—including politicians and religious leaders. We were angry at the prevalence of illegal and unethical

practices of the giants of business and industry—and by their underlings.

No single event has ever troubled our nation more than the terrorist attacks of 9/11. We know that more than 3,000 people were killed, but we cannot tally the number of people who knew and loved those who lost their lives. Nor can we measure the shock felt all over the nation—and indeed all over the world. And that event triggered the sending of U.S. troops into Afghanistan and into Iraq, and widened the rift between the United States and virtually the entire Arab world.

During this era North Carolina's population rose dramatically—from 6.6 million in 1990 to 8 million in 2000. The number was projected to be more than 10 million by 2020. Attracted primarily by the favorable economic and educational climate in North Carolina and in Wake County in particular, people were coming from all over the nation. In addition, immigrants (both legal and illegal) accounted for much of the growth, and a high percentage of those immigrants were Hispanic. Between 1990 and 2000 the state's Hispanic population increased by 150%. While at one time most Hispanics in the state were farm workers, the majority found employment in non-agricultural jobs. Wake was listed as one of the nation's thirty fastest-growing counties in Latino population. There were also many Asian immigrants, the majority of whom were employed in business and industrial occupations. In all, people of more than fifty different language groups were found in the county in numbers sufficiently large to affect the schools, the businesses, the industries, the housing pattern, the media—and the churches.

Against this background, we can easily understand that the religious situation in the United States—and in Wake County, North Carolina—was changing. Several broad generalizations can be made:

- The percentage of the people claiming allegiance to some religious faith was declining.
- The percentage of the people involved in the life of the church who were over the age of 65 was increasing.
- Moral standards long proclaimed as intrinsic to the Christian faith were not simply being violated—their validity was being rejected.
- The family-oriented church was challenged to deal with people in a society in which the structure of the family was changing.

- As people looked for churches with which to affiliate, denominational allegiance became increasingly unimportant.
- In spite of the insistence of the churches that they were open to all people, ethnic group churches continued to predominate among minorities.
- The churches which grew most rapidly did not belong to the main-line denominations, but were independent and charismatic groups.

When Charles McMillan announced his resignation as Director of Missions for the Raleigh Baptist Association, he said that he was doing so because he was convinced that the Association needed to make significant changes in order to do what God wanted them to do. How did they go about making those changes?

Organization and Staff

Having had six months notice that Charles McMillan would leave the position of Director of Missions at the end of February, 1994, the search committee (Chairman Jim Turner, Jo Ann Giles, Mack Thompson, and Richard Smith) was ready to report at the January 18, 1994, session of the Executive Committee. They presented the name of Roger Nix, a North Carolinian and a 1975 graduate of Gardner Webb College. He had received an MRE/M.Div. from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1978 and a D.Min. in 1986. While a student at Gardner Webb College he had been Minister of Youth at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Hudson, NC. He had been Associate Pastor at Temple Baptist Church in Raleigh while he was a student at Southeastern, and in 1979 he became pastor of that church. He left Temple in 1992 to become pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Carrollton, Georgia, where he was serving when he was called to the position with the Raleigh Baptist Association.

Nix was well-known in the Association when he assumed the position of Director of Missions on March 1, 1994. He was a discipleship training special worker for the State Convention from 1978 until he moved to Georgia. He had been on the Raleigh Association's Executive Committee, a member of the Board of Ministers and a member of the

Alumni Board of Directors of Gardner-Webb College, and author of Sunday school lessons for the *Biblical Recorder*. From 1983 through 1987 he had written for the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. He had served as Adjunct Professor of Supervised Ministry at Southeastern Seminary from 1989 until he left the state in 1992. In 1990 he had been President of the North Carolina chapter of the Alumni Association of Southeastern Seminary.

In his first letter to the Association, published in the March, 1994, issue of *Outreach*, after expressing profound appreciation for McMillan and his work, Roger Nix said that he looked forward to working with the current staff. At that time there were three full-time Associate Directors. Marsha Cook was Associate Director for Church and Community Ministries. She worked with the Commission whose work was outlined in Bylaw II-D: "This commission shall be responsible for helping churches recognize and meet the poverty needs of people in our area. It shall also discover needs and design programs to deal with family and other social needs." Cook, therefore, was expected to be an "activist"—and that she was. In her report at the October, 1995, meeting of the Association she spoke of her work in the areas of Summer Missions/MultiFamily Housing, Brochures for Apartment Dwellers, Civic Issues/Moral Problems, Substance Abuse, AIDS Education, Hunger, CROP Walk, Housing, Crises Assistance, Health Care, Literacy, Child Care, Blind/Vision Impaired, Deaf/Hearing Impaired, Mentally Challenged, Senior Adult Ministries, Single Adult Ministries, and Migrant Ministries. In the years that followed, her reports were of the same sort, varying in detail as the circumstances changed. After fourteen years with the Association, she resigned at the end of 2003 to accept a position with the Triangle Disabilities Group. In the November-December, 2003, issue of *Connections* Roger Nix said:

> Marsha has made a difference in the lives of many individuals and families during her years of ministry here in the RBA. Her work in literacy, migrant ministry, ESL, and summer missions are especially noteworthy among the many duties she was responsible for. She was well known and respected throughout the social services network of Wake County. We will miss her expertise and experiences in each of these areas and others as well.

Jo Ann Stancil was Associate Director for Church Growth and Development. In this capacity, she worked primarily to offer support for the programs of the local churches—in religious education, music, the Woman's Missionary Union, the Brotherhood, and media centers. Because her work was primarily with continuing programs in the churches, her task was to find effective ways of providing training for new workers and offering new resources to experienced ones. Her 1995 report to the Association characterizes what she regularly did. She said that

> The Leadership Training Commission is proud to report that we have trained a minimum of 5,586 people in various events this past year. (This does not include all of those trained at the quarterly associational meetings.) We are grateful for the many opportunities we have had to **supply** the training opportunities to meet surveyed needs, and the **demand** for further teaching/learning experiences in the future.

Roy A. Smith was Associate Director for Church Extension and Language Ministry, but he had already made his decision to resign. On March 15, two weeks after Nix assumed office, he submitted his resignation, to be effective April 14. He stated that "This resignation is in no way a dissatisfaction with the Raleigh Baptist Association. Rather, it is due to a call that has been extended from the Sandy Creek Baptist Association for me to become their next Director of Missions." In the April, 1994, issue of *Outreach* in which Smith's letter of resignation was published, Nix spoke with appreciation for his work and said, "I have welcomed him to stay and continue to be a part of our ministry team." Having worked with McMillan for seven years however, and uncertain as to what new directions the Association might take under Nix's leadership, Smith seems to have felt that the time was ripe for him to move into a new work.

The new direction that Nix had in mind did not become immediately apparent. He came with no agenda for immediate change, but rather with an appreciation for the past and an openness to the leadership of the Spirit and to the wisdom of the leaders in the Association. In his message printed in the *1994 Annual* he said:

> The mission vision I share with you has several underlying biblical and missional presuppositions:

1. God has uniquely called and equipped every church for missions and ministry that is peculiar to that church.
2. God calls churches to complement one another, not compete with each other, to reach the lost.
3. Every church can participate in mission adventures beyond their four walls because God has divinely brought together the resources necessary to do missions.

Nix challenged the churches "to embrace with all their energy and resources a comprehensive missions strategy" on international missions, national missions, and local missions. While his statement suggests no strategies, it does indicate the emphases that Nix considered important. The details would emerge later.

Meanwhile, a search committee was appointed to find a successor to Roy Smith. Instead of nominating one person for that position, however, the committee proposed a different approach which the Association approved at its quarterly meeting on April 25, 1995. They began with the statement that their decision was influenced by four factors—the lack of funds, the wide variety in the responsibilities to be met, the possibility of meeting those needs more effectively, and the potential of saving money. Then they recommended that

> the Association establish the three part-time positions of Multicultural/Ethnic Ministry Consultant, Chaplaincy Ministry Consultant, and Church Planting, Migrant Ministry and Multi-Housing Consultant, and that Rev. Charles Farag, Rev. Tony Wilson, Cindi [*sic*] Buffaloe to [*be?*] approved to fill these positions respectively.

Cindy Buffaloe began her work in January, 2005, as Consultant on Church Planting, Migrant Ministry, and Multi-Housing Consultant. She was a graduate of Campbell University, and after joining the staff of the Association she completed her work on an M.A. in Christian Education from Campbell Divinity School. For three years she had been on the staff at Memorial Church in Buie's Creek, and for another two years at Pleasant Grove Church in Fuquay Varina. She came to the Association from the Baptist State Convention, where she had been Consultant Coordinator and Department Secretary since 1990.

Charles Farag began his work at the same time. A graduate of the Evangelical Seminary of Egypt, he had been a pastor in Egypt for nine years, and in Lebanon for three years, before becoming pastor of the Arabic Congregation of Edison Baptist Church in Edison, New Jersey, in 1984. In 1986 he had come to serve the Arabic Congregation of Trinity Church in Raleigh, and he continued in that position after he accepted the part-time work with the Association.

Tony Wilson apparently did not begin his work with the Association until a bit later, for his name does not appear in the staff directory until 1996. Several years were to pass before there was another major staff change.

After a year of "listening, discussing, evaluating, praying, and strategizing," Nix presented his "Vision Strategy" to the Executive Committee in February, 1995. He recommended the formation of a Task Force "to study, evaluate and recommend changes to our existing organizational structure, staff, communication process and any other areas which need attention and which will foster greater fellowship among our churches and allow the Raleigh Baptist Association to resource and serve the Churches at their point of need." He announced his plan to the Association in the April, 1995, issue of *Outreach*, saying:

> The Mission Statement which will guide us from 1995–2000 AD is based on Matthew 28:19–20 "**Linking the Great Commission to Church Mission for Kingdom Growth.** The over-arching planning strategy theme will be "Vision 20-21." As we develop Kingdom priorities for the next five years, we will seek to focus on ministry and mission concerns which can give us direction as we face the transition into a new century.

The Task Force was appointed, and in his 1995 "Message" to the Association Nix shared his reasons for asking that the study be made:

> First in recent years far too much of what we have engaged in has been competitive with other denominational entities, cultures, and autonomous churches. Secondly, clarification and re-definition of the term "cooperation" must occur if world missions as a joint venture is to continue. Perhaps we will discover that "collaboration" in some mission adventures is more

acceptable when local church mission priorities are considered. Thirdly, an old top down strategic planning and implementation process needs to be replaced with local churches taking the initiative for dreaming, planning, and doing. This means we will have to develop systems thinking over the old program approach.

In keeping with the effort to plan for the transition into the 21st century, the Association's newsletter was given a new name and a new format. In the first issue of *Connections* (September, 1995), Roger Nix said, "Along with the name change there is a new format which will emphasize our mission statement and allow more space for communicating happenings in our churches." Calling attention to the newly-adopted logo, he said that "All materials we use in the future will contain this logo and our mission statement."

CONNECTIONS

Abruptly, the work of the Task Force was put on hold when Nix became seriously ill. In March, 1996, he traveled to South Africa with a group from the Baptist State Convention to plan a partnership with the Baptists of that country. Shortly after his arrival there he fell victim to what proved to be a long and debilitating illness. Not knowing how long he would be incapacitated, the Executive Committee began to make plans to carry on his work during his absence. The Association's moderator, Mack Thompson, chaired the Interim Advisory Committee. The major burden, of course, fell upon the staff, and Jo Ann Stancil was asked to serve as staff team leader. In May, Charles McMillan agreed to work with the staff as a volunteer for one day a week. In September, Nix began to return to the office for an hour or two twice a week. For the October, 1996, annual meeting he prepared a message in which he said of the trip:

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> It was also the beginning of a journey through the deepest and most difficult valley of my life. How grateful I am that you have been partners with me and my family on this journey. No minister could have been blessed with better support. As I continue to rehab from two spinal cord surgeries and get back into full-time duties, please know that I covet your prayers and thank God for your ministry and love already expressed in so many wonderful manifestations.

Then he spoke about the future for the Association, saying that "every decision we make now will determine what kind of association we shall be entering the third millennium."

In her report in that same year, Jo Ann Stancil rehearsed the difficulties the staff had had, saying that "1996 came in with a *blast*. The winter of 1996 took its toll on all of us, both in work stoppage, financial shortfalls, and a basic closure in the routine." The long-range planning and plans for a new building had been put on hold. In addition, Marsha Cook had had serious surgery. Stancil concluded that the staff had done their best with "the second string quarterback" and the "great lay leadership." Acknowledging that "The transition is not over," she nevertheless saw that things were getting better. Nix had gradually increased his hours on the job, but it was June, 1997, before he was able to resume full-time work.

The Association

From time to time there were questions about the annual meetings of the Association. Attendance was often quite small. On Monday evening, October 25, 1993, for example, 102 messengers representing 41 churches were registered. Fifty-six churches sent no messengers. At the Tuesday evening session there were 110 messengers representing 50 churches, and forty-seven churches and missions were not represented. In light of that situation it was generally agreed that some change needed to be made. Although the Constitution specified that the sessions would be held on "the last Monday and Tuesday evenings in October of each year," the Association voted that beginning in 1995 the Annual Association Meeting would be a one day session. Because of plans that

were already under way, the change was not made in 1995, but in 1996.

The motion to shorten the annual session included the statement that the meeting "should be a time of celebration of what the association is doing in missions rather than a time of reading so many reports." There was some feeling that that statement needed to be made more specific. At the September 27, 1995, meeting of the Executive Committee, therefore, the Meetings and Plans Commission recommended "That the Association invite no more than two institutions or agencies whose trustees are elected by the Baptist State Convention to participate on the Annual Meeting program with a time limit of seven minutes." Thereafter, while oral reports were not completely eliminated, they did begin to take a more inspirational form. The quarterly meetings were not changed, though major business items were generally reserved for the annual session.

While the minutes do not record attendance in the years following the change, the problem clearly was not resolved. At the meeting of the Executive Committee on September 30, 1997, "Mack Thompson shared his concern about the attendance of pastors/staff at the annual meeting. He asked if a letter should be sent to all pastors encouraging them and their staff to be present at this important meeting. Roger [*Nix*] said that he would get a letter out." Perhaps, however, attendance was in no way related to the program or to the length of the session, but to the intensity of interest in what is happening within the Association. If that be the case, then perhaps only an unusual situation would result in high attendance!

While fewer than half the churches sent messengers to the meetings of the Association, most did send their annual reports. Only twelve of the one hundred and four member churches failed to report in 1997. (This count does not include the missions.) In 1998 nine out of one hundred and three did not report. By 2003, however, the numbers had risen to sixteen out of one hundred and seven, and in 2005 it was eighteen out of one hundred and eight. Who knows why a specific church did not send in a report in any given year? It is striking, however, that each year approximately half of the non-reporting congregations were less than ten years old.

Within the Association a concern arose about non-cooperating churches. At the December 17, 1996, meeting of the Executive Committee George Fuller raised the issue. Following a lively discussion, "A motion was made to express concern to the Mutual Care Commission

about churches not cooperating with the Association; for the Mutual Care Commission to sit down and talk with them about their desire to be a part of the association. Passed." The records do not show that any action was taken about non-cooperating churches that were already members of the Association. The Mutual Care Commission, however, did make an effort to ensure that churches which moved from watchcare into full membership intended to cooperate fully. They told the Executive Committee on February 25, 1997, that they planned to send a form to watchcare churches asking them to indicate their current participation in the work of the Association. They noted that "If the church returns their form with *no participation*, then the Mutual Care Commission will have the right to meet with them again."

Four years later the issue came up in the Missions and Ministry Council. At that Council's meeting on November 27, 2001, the question was raised about churches that make no contribution to the Association. Roger Nix responded that "to be a member of the association is to cooperate by giving and to complete the congregational profile. Bill Goodwin suggested that a letter be sent that if they do not contribute and complete the profile that we will drop them after three years." The minutes report no action on the suggestion.

Action by the Association was finally taken the next year. In the spring of 2002, the Missions and Ministry Council looked into the requirements of other associations for joining and maintaining membership. On October 22, 2002, the Association adopted a revision of the Constitution's *Article III* on Membership proposed by the Church Relations and Credentials Team which made two important changes. The first change was in response to the Southern Baptist Convention's recent revision of the Baptist Faith and Message statement which limited the leadership of women in the church. The Association's original membership statement that "Member churches shall maintain doctrinal positions and practices which are consistent with Scripture" was revised to read, "Member churches shall maintain scriptural integrity and doctrinal positions and practices consistent with one of the Baptist Faith and Messages." That left the door open to churches which rejected the new Southern Baptist version and recognized women both as deacons and as pastors.

The second change was the adoption of a *Section B* to the article on membership which said, "A cooperating church shall be one that supports

the ministry and mission of the Association through annual financial gifts and by completing the Annual Congregation Profile." It defined financial support as the contribution to the Association of a minimum of one percent of the church's undesignated gifts, and stated that if a church did not support the Association in this way, its messengers would not be seated at the annual session. It stated in addition that if a church failed to complete the Annual Congregation Profile by October 1 of each year, its messengers would not be seated at the annual session of the next year. If enforced, that revision would provide a channel for the dropping of churches from the Association's membership list.

For the most part, the financial support of the Association was secure, with many churches increasing their contributions a bit each year, more contributing about the same amount each year, and a few decreasing their contributions from time to time. The 1994 budget was $383,772, and it was almost identical with the 1993 budget. Thereafter, however, while there was no dramatic increase, the annual budget did grow a bit almost every year, rising to $682,026 in 2005. That is not to suggest that the budget was always met. Indeed, from time to time in 2005 the Executive Committee was informed that receipts were not enough to meet operating expenses. For the next eight years, however, there was no hint of further financial problems. Then the situation changed, and at the annual session in 2003 Bill Goodwin, chair of the Resource Committee, reported that

> the committee knew mid year that the budget would not be met. The church contributions were down, therefore the 2004 budget was adjusted. He continued that every area will receive a decrease for 2004. The position that was left vacant by the Consultant for Missions and Ministry will not be replaced. The 2004 budget does show the staff will be given the increase in health insurance but no salary increase or housing allowance for the professional staff.

One reason for the problem was a significant reduction in the State Convention's support of cooperative work. But more important was the failure of some churches to support the work of the Association. The Church Relations and Credentials Committee reported in that same meeting that they were "researching the reasons" for that failure. Executive Director Nix pointed to the economic situation which was

causing significant financial strain for many churches. Then, saying that the Association had met every challenge, he warned that "The ways we do ministry will have to change just as it has in many of the churches of the Raleigh Baptist Association."

Since mutual care was one function of the Association, from time to time it fell to the lot of the leadership to deal with conflict within the churches. Roger Nix often informed the Executive Committee that such conflict was on the increase. In the May, 1994, meeting, for example, he asked for prayer for a church which, he said, was "in serious conflict and division." The next month he reported that he had met with a group who had withdrawn from that church and were planning to establish a new one which would seek affiliation with the Association. By September that had been done.

Many other churches were having problems which are not recorded in such detail. Nix informed the Executive Committee at their December 19, 1994, meeting that he was consulting with several congregations. Two months later (February 28) he named two "that are in need of prayer at this time." The next month (March 28) he implied that in some instances the problems were associated with the pastoral leadership, saying "There are a number of churches in conflicting situations. Please pray for these churches. Good things are coming out in the healing process. Those that have lost pastors are looking at Intentional Interim pastors." One church in which there was conflict over the pastor was a language mission. Charles Farag, Consultant for Multicultural/Ethnic Ministry told the Executive Committee on September 26, 1995, that there had been leadership problems for some time. He said that the pastor "doesn't listen to advice that is given and continues to go his own way. Many charter members have left due to his leadership. At one time was averaging between 60–70 but are only averaging 10–12 at the present." He added that the sponsoring church planned to continue the pastor's salary only until June, 1996.

Another church suffered a split in the fall of 1996, when a group withdrew with the intention of forming a new church in the same area. In an effort to effect a reconciliation, Charles McMillan met with the group in August to work on conflict management. In September Tony Cartledge, for the Church Extension and Language Commission, said that he had two meetings with the group. In the Executive Committee's meeting in February, 1997, when the question was raised about

whether there were churches ready to be presented as new missions, Cindy Buffaloe reported that she was unsure as to whether that group intended to seek affiliation with the Association.

In September 30, 1997, Nix again spoke in general terms about the problem, saying to the Executive Committee that there were "churches without pastors and those having problems." The problem of conflict within the churches was certainly not unique to the Raleigh Baptist Association. In the July, 1998, issue of *Connections* Roger Nix cited a 1997 study that revealed "at least a hundred and forty-six ministers in Baptist State Convention churches experienced forced termination." He said

> The most common causes of termination were control issues, poor people skills on the part of the pastor, the church's resistance to change, leadership style, and the church was already conflicted when the pastor arrived. Only two ministers were dismissed over ethical issues.

On February 23, 1999, Nix announced that he had planned a meeting with interim pastors now serving in the Association to discuss issues they face in the interim. In the Executive Committee meeting on January 30, 2001, he announced a meeting with "a number of churches to train search committees. The vacancies are from being fired or going to be fired." On March 27, 2001, the Missions and Ministry Council heard that the pastor at one church had been terminated. Two months later they were told that a number of churches were having conflict, that several pastors were struggling with their ministry, and that the staff was working with them. Two months later the Council discussed the problem at length.

> Roger reported there has been an increased number of terminations of staff and pastors. A significant number of them are going through conflict. Churches are looking at why the conflict is there.
>
> James Hartley asked, "Do we have a group that would help these churches and staff in conflict rather than the RBA staff? Roger shared that there is a trust level by coming to the RBA staff."

In addition, Cindy Buffaloe said that she had conducted personal interviews at one of the churches "as a part of our assistance with congregational issues."

Yet the problem accelerated. At the September 25, 2001, meeting of the Missions and Ministry Council it was reported that Roger Nix and Cindy Buffaloe were working with two churches in conflict management. The note was added that "There are a number of churches still in serious conflict." Cindy was working with the interim pastor of one of the two churches on "things the church can be doing to move ahead in their healing process." At the November meeting the Council heard that Roger, Cindy, and Jerry had held three sessions on conflict resolution with one of the churches in trouble. Nix began his column for the July, 2002, *Connections* with the observation that

> In the past eight years twenty-five ministers have been terminated in the Raleigh Baptist Association. This statistic should give rise to great concern and sincere efforts to discover ways to resolve both congregational conflict and leadership incompetence. In most situations the deacons or other spiritual leaders, who have no training in these issues, are left with the unpleasant task of confronting the issues and making tough decisions.

The intervention of the staff was often of great help to congregations and to individuals, but the problem was not simply an issue between pastor and people. It was an overall change in the religious climate throughout the nation—a change in the understanding of the nature both of the church and of pastoral leadership. As painful as it was, all indications were that the situation would continue to worsen.

Vision 20/21

One of the first things that Nix did after he resumed full-time work following his illness was to revive the Vision 20/21 project. He was still intent on studying and evaluating the manner in which the Association was functioning and recommending changes where they seemed appropriate. He informed the Executive Committee on March 31, 1998, that a Committee was being formed. Joanne Edwards, Brad Ferguson, Marshall

Neathery, Tony Cartledge, George Fuller, Lee Ray Greene, Kay Bissette, Julia Ledford, Rick Beech, Mark White, Jack Glasgow, and the staff of the Association were named on the Task Force, and by the beginning of the summer they were at work. They lost no time, and on November 24, 1998, presented their report to the Executive Committee. At that time the announcement was made that their recommendations would be presented to the Association for information at the January, 1999, quarterly meeting, and would be voted on at the next quarterly meeting in April.

The Executive Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion of the report at their March 30, 1999, meeting. Roger Nix began his presentation by citing the diversity of the churches in the Association and saying that "With that in mind the new structure and changes were made to be inclusive of all of our churches." The minutes do not always indicate whose comments were being reported, but salient statements indicate the importance and the tenor of the proposal. Jack Glasgow chaired the meeting, and it may have been he who said:

> The Ministry teams under each area of ministry will take a more active role. There will be a facilitator of each. The Executive Director (DOM) will be in charge of the teams. The missions and ministry has been coasting for some time and is going to be more accountable with the new structure. All committees will have a tremendous amount of work to be done. This will be a foundation tool to regulate us.

Commenting on the temptation for the Executive Director (DOM) to become a micro manager, Nix insisted that he would resist it. He stated that his staff was highly talented and capable. He said that "He will trust these people as long as they don't do anything to damage that trust." The minutes attribute several other salient comments to him:

> ... they have gone to the Resource Commission and asked them to embrace a major compensation change for the staff.
>
> This association is different from any other. It will take one, two, three years to solidify. It will take churches that long to embrace the new structure.
>
> The Association will continue the same ministries, but maybe under a different structure. Churches today don't even call

> their programs the same any longer. We will find individuals and teams to help.
>
> The new structure will take place beginning with the Spring meeting in April, 2000 and new slate of officers will take over in May 1.

After that lengthy discussion in which it became clear that some people had concerns about the plan, the recommended changes were approved

> That the Executive Committee supports the restructure of the Association and the Constitution Revision. We trust the process, it is a good structure, we vote to adopt it and to empower a group of 5 members from the Vision 20/21 Task Force to be members of the Transition Team appointed by the Moderator and Vice Moderator.

At its April, 1999, meeting the Association accepted the report and approved the constitutional amendments required to implement its recommendations. The intent to decentralize the Association was signaled by the new statement of purpose (Article II-A). The old statement called the Association "an interchurch community of faith supporting congregations in doing Christ's redemptive work and linking congregations in cooperative ministries ..." The new statement calls it "a fellowship of congregations joining God wherever He is at work." The old objectives (Article II-B) were "to build the interchurch community of faith," "to promote church growth and development," "to encourage and enable cooperative ministries," and "to promote a closer relationship" with the wider denominational organizations. The new objectives are "To assist churches in discovering mission opportunities," "To provide networks" for mutual support and encouragement, "To encourage the building of relationships" between the churches, "To identify for churches the resources available," and "To challenge churches to reach the unchurched."

Article II-C (Core Values) is a new section, for which there was no parallel in the old one. It names and describes briefly seven "Core Values": Revelation, People, Diversity, Cooperation, Excellence, Innovation, and Results. This section, the language of which is more sermonic than regulatory, concludes with the statement that these values "serve to guide and inform our cooperative work in Wake County

as we *link the Great Commission to church mission for kingdom growth.*"

Article IV (Meetings) provides for two meetings a year, rather than one. It reduces the minimum number of messengers allowed each church from ten to five. And, unlike the old provision, it sets a maximum number of messengers (10) allowed from any church. In the revision of Section C of this Article there is a significant omission: like the old version, it asserts that the Association has no power over the "internal rights of the churches," but that it may "advise with the member churches and recommend measures of usefulness for their adoption." There the provision stops. Unlike the old version, it does not "claim for itself, its objects and program, the highest consideration."

Article V of the old Constitution deals with "Departments," stating that "The Association shall promote an aggressive program of teaching, training, evangelism, mission, and stewardship emphasis through the following departments: Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood, and Music." The revised version substitutes the term "Ministry Teams" for "Departments," and names four: Administrative, Congregation Support, Missions Involvement, and Vision Awareness. It is noted that the specific assignments of each team "can be found in the Ministry Teams, Commissions and Committees Manual."

Article VII (Administration) of the old constitution charges the Director of Missions and the rests of the staff "with the responsibility of the promotion of the whole program of the Association and denomination." In the revised version they are charged with "the responsibility of providing resources and services to member churches."

The Vision 20/21 team was asked to serve as the "Transition Team" to guide the implementation of the changes. At the annual meeting of the Association on Tuesday, October 26, 1999, Chairman Mark White explained the revision and restructuring of the Association. He said that four issues were dealt with:

(1) Issue of Meetings and Plans—Semi-Annual meetings and Messengers. Each church will be notified in January, based on church size, the number of messengers. The first to register at the session will be the messengers for both semi-annual sessions.
(2) Ministry Team Structure—This must be a fluid structure. If there is an interest—people can network special projects.

There are four ministry teams: The Administration Team, The Congregation Support Team, The Missions Involvement Team and the Vision Assistance Team.

(3) Volunteer Staffing—The Nominating Committee is asking for help sending out requests for nominees. Pastors and Deacon Chairpersons will get a letter from the Nominating Committee.

(4) Personnel—How best to organize and equip the administrative staff and ministry staff who are responsible to Roger Nix. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to call on a consultant to come and look at the effectiveness of our staff. Dr. Chris Hobgood of Washington, DC is to do the study.

The second issue number had obvious implications for work of the staff. The Associate Directors and Consultants had been employed under the old structure to do specific and well-defined jobs. Adjustments had to be made to conform to the changed structure. With which Ministry Teams would the staff persons function and how would their responsibilities differ? For the most part, the title changes reflected the new structure and the changed responsibilities. The "Director of Missions" became the "Executive Director." The "Associate Director for Church and Community Ministries" became "Consultant for Community Missions." The "Associate Director for Church Growth and Development" became "Associate Director for Church Programs and Development." The "Multicultural/Ethnic Ministry Consultant" became "Consultant for Church Ethnic Starts." The "Church Planting, Migrant & Multi-Housing Consultant" became "Consultant for Church Start Strategies, Demographics, and Multi-Housing." The "Administrative Assistant" became "Administration and Communication Assistant." Only three titles were unchanged—"Financial Secretary," "Ministry Assistant" and "Program Assistant." One position, "Chaplaincy Ministry Consultant," was eliminated.

The fourth issue may have caused some anxiety on the part of the staff. Asking for an outside consultant "to examine the personnel structure, review job descriptions and evaluate staff" may have been perceived as an indication of dissatisfaction with their work. As stated, the concern was not necessarily about the individuals who occupied the positions

but about the overall structure which had developed, not according to a specific plan, but according to needs perceived as time passed. Even so, the persons involved may have wondered whether, having been employed with one job description, they would be happy working with another. At any rate, the consultant was employed. After a preliminary visit to the Association, he returned in December, 1999, "for individual conferences with the staff and present plans on how the consulting recommendations will assist in the putting together the staff structure."

While the consultant was doing his work, in the fall of 2000 Jo Ann Stancil tendered her resignation, to be effective on September 9. She had been "Director of Church Growth and Development" for fourteen years, and had been "team leader" during Nix's illness. Apparently she believed that the timing was good for her to make a change. She left the Association to become Associate Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church. At the last associational meeting which she attended as a staff member, Roger Nix spoke with great appreciation for her service, Jo Ann Edwards gave a personal word of appreciation, and "There was a standing tribute by the messengers."

James Hartley (chairman), George Fuller, Julia Ledford, Lois McCoy, and Jesse Waugh were appointed to a committee to find a successor to Stancil. After a search that took eight months, they recommended Jerry Helderman, a graduate of Carson-Newman College and of Golden Gate Seminary. From 1964 through 1980 he had been Minister of Music and Education in five different churches. From 1980 through 1990 he was Minister of Education and Administration in two churches, one of which was Trinity in Raleigh. Since 1990 he had been Minister of Education and Senior Adults at Cary's First Baptist Church. At a special meeting of the Missions and Ministry Council held on June 14, 2001, he was called to be "Associate Director for Church Programs and Leadership Development."

The records do not show when the work of the consultant was completed, nor do they contain a copy of his report. Other staff changes did occur, however, during and shortly after his work. Mary Ashe, Director of Christian Women's Job Corps, tendered her resignation to be effective on September 9, 1999, and on August 30 she was replaced by Paula Settle. Tony Wilson resigned his position as Consultant for Chaplaincy Ministries because, he said, "The demands upon me at this time, both personally and professionally do not allow me the time and energy

necessary to provide the quality of leadership Chaplaincy Ministries deserves." His resignation became effective on October 31, 2000, and he was not replaced.

Relating to the Denomination

The relationship of the Raleigh Baptist Association to the larger denomination remained unchanged during this era. The structure remained the same, the basic programs remained the same, the cooperative efforts remained the same, the loyalties remained the same. To the staff and to many of the churches (although not all), being Baptist meant relating to the Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. They knew, of course, about other Baptist groups in the area—the General Baptist State Convention, the Primitive Baptists, the Free Will Baptists, the American Baptist Churches, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Alliance of Baptists. Yet for most of them being a Baptist church meant cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For the Association it meant continuing support from the State Convention for specific programs. In the meetings of committees and commissions and of the Association itself, little was said about the denominational organizations, however. It was simply taken for granted.

Yet within the denomination changes were taking place which created some discomfort and disagreement in the Association. One matter was a proposal before the Southern Baptist Convention in 1995 that the denomination's missions education program be shifted from the Woman's Missionary Union to the Brotherhood, that the promotion of the Lottie Moon Christmas offering be directed by the Foreign Mission Board rather than the Woman's Missionary Union, and that the promotion of the Annie Armstrong Easter offering be shifted from the WMU to the Home Mission Board. At their annual meeting on March 26, 1995, the Raleigh Association WMU drafted a letter to be sent to the appropriate persons objecting to those changes.

In their February 27, 1997, meeting the Executive Committee discussed the impact of the proposed realignment in the Home Mission Board/North American Mission Board. The concern was expressed that "Seventy-five per cent of the HMB staff will lose their jobs in the

re-alignment process and we don't know if that means more money or less."

One movement in the Southern Baptist Convention (though not in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina) was the rejection of the leadership of women in churches and in denominational organizations. Churches in the Association continued to request the ordination of women and the Ordination Committee continued to examine and recommend them. Almost every year at least one woman was ordained, and often more than one. That did not mean an increase in the number of women pastors, but it did mean an increase in the number of associate pastors and in the possibility of women being pastors. In addition, many churches continued to have women deacons.

In the fall of 1998 Raleigh's First Baptist Church officially terminated its relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention. That fact was noted, though apparently not discussed, in the meeting of the Executive Committee on September 29, 1998. The only comment in the

Raleigh Baptist Association breaks new ground

minutes is to the effect that "They are still connected to Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and Raleigh Baptist Association."

At the September 21, 1999, meeting of the Executive Committee the Moderator called attention to an article in a recent issue of the *Biblical Recorder* which discussed the decision of the Committee on Committees to allow persons who no longer support the Southern Baptist Convention to serve as officers of the Board. The Moderator felt that clarification was needed, and was given permission to write to Jim Royston for that information. Again, the records do not indicate a response.

The Building

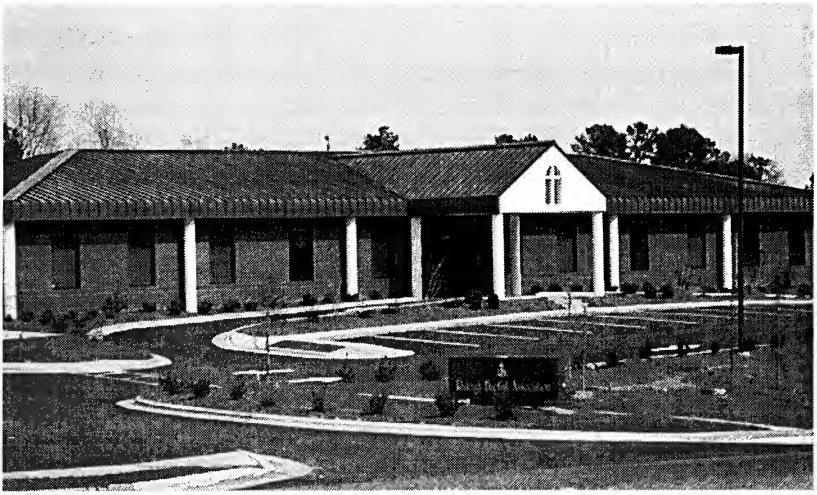
At the same time that the Vision 20/21 Task Force was doing its work, the Association was required to make some decisions about the housing of its offices. Questions about the adequacy of the current location (2600 New Bern Avenue in Raleigh) arose in the mid-1990s. The Resource Commission reported to the Executive Committee on September 1, 1994, that they had been looking at the property, "considering repairs needed and value of property." The estimated value of the building was $250,000, but repairs needed immediately would cost $20,000, and another $40–50,000 would be required to bring the building up to code. Asked to continue its study, the Commission reported two months later that the present building would have to be brought up to handicap codes by the end of 1995, and that other repairs were urgently needed. On April 25, 1995, they reported that they had been contacted by a party interested in purchasing the property. In light of all of the total situation, they recommended that the Association authorize them "to thoroughly evaluate our property and building needs relative to building codes, costs, space, location and real estate values and bring a recommendation back to the association at the next quarterly meeting." On June 27, 1995, they told the Executive Committee they planned to recommend at the next Quarterly Meeting that the Association engage Dunn and Sargents Associates "to look into the matter of selling the present property and locating a site for us." That action was taken. But the relocation process took a long time, and in the meanwhile, in order to meet the building code, the Association was forced to replace the heating and air conditioning system, and to replace the roof.

Like the work of the Vision 20/21 Task Force, the consideration of relocating the offices had been put on hold during the crisis of Roger Nix's illness in 1996 and his long absence from the office. But it was not forgotten. Soon after his return to work, Nix brought the subject before the Executive Committee again, saying that one finding of the "listening process" of two years earlier was that there was a concern "to move from a passive mode to active options for the future of the Raleigh Baptist Association and its location." Serious consideration was given, he added, to "what the association can offer the churches with larger facilities." After some discussion Nix was authorized to appoint a new Facilities Study Committee. He named Ed Coates, David Hailey, John Hatcher, Nancy Hunter, Richard Smith, Ron Smith, and Mack Thompson, with Roger Nix and Jack Glasgow as *ex officio* members.

The committee began its work immediately. A buyer was found quickly, and at a called meeting on June 6, 2000, the Missions and Ministries Council authorized the sale of the current property for $440,000 and the renting of temporary office space for the Association. In that same session the "Relocation/Building Committee" was authorized to negotiate offers and contracts "relative to the purchase of a building/land and or contracts pertaining to building a new Resource Center." The committee chose a site on Poole Road near I-440 and, with the endorsement of the Executive Committee, drew up plans for the building.

The process was brought to the Association at its regular session on October 24, 2000. The committee began its presentation by citing the "core values" and the "mission opportunities" of the Association and noting the inadequacy of the New Bern property. Mack Thompson, pastor at Ridge Road, reported on the three-acre site on Poole Road at I-440. Then a motion authorizing the committee to exercise the option to purchase the property of $485,425 was passed. After Nancy Hunter presented the building plans and Richard Smith talked about the Association's financial resources, a motion was passed to conduct a five-year capital campaign.

A loan was secured so that construction could begin quickly. A groundbreaking ceremony for the new building was held on March 18, 2001. Construction proceeded at the normal pace, with the usual delays, and the building was completed only two months behind schedule. The offices were moved into the building on January 7–10, 2001, and a service of dedication was held on February 17, 2002.



Raleigh Baptist Association Resource Center

Supporting Church Starts

Over the years, the responsibility of cooperating with the Mutual Care Commission in work with new churches moved from one staff person to another. From the beginning of the expansion of the Association in the mid-1940s, it had been the Director of Missions who did that work. When the Association added the position of "Director of Missions/Ministries" in 1982, that staff person assumed the responsibility. Then in 1989 the work passed to the "Director of Church Extension and Languages." During all of those years the work grew significantly.

In contrast with earlier decades, many starts between 1994 and 2005 did not become churches. There were so many attempts at church starts that they cannot be counted, and many of them failed. In 1994 there were at least six starts, not including the ethnic congregations. Only two of the six were listed in the 2005 *Annual* as member churches, however, and only one of those two made a report for the year. In 1995, five churches (one of which was a Hispanic group) were granted watchcare status, but ten years later only two of them were listed as members of the Association.

Because the year 1994 was a time of transition in leadership in the Association, not a great deal of attention was given to the establishment of missions and churches. According to the minutes of the Executive Committee for March 29, 1994, two missions, Disciples Way and Immanuel Christian Fellowship, were struggling. Another, however, New Horizons Fellowship, was thriving. The 1994 report of the Church Extension and Language Ministry notes that "Wellspring Community Church, led by Mike Sparks, is now meeting and worshipping in the Clayton area," and that "Cornerstone Baptist Church is a new congregation meeting in the Wake Forest Middle School." It spoke also of the mission in Shotwell community sponsored by Bethlehem Church. And in that session two churches, Faith Baptist and Fairview Baptist, were accepted under watchcare. Meanwhile, the Executive Committee was studying the job description for the replacement of Roy Smith as Associate Director for Church Language and Extension.

When, in 1995, Cindy Buffaloe joined the staff of the Association as Consultant for Church Planting, Migrant Ministry, and Multi-Housing, a change was taking place in the way new churches were established. The Association had always operated under the theory that "churches start churches." At times, as in the years when Lee Pridgen was Director of Missions, the Association itself had taken the initiative. At times, as in the years when Robert Costner was Director of Missions, the initiative was left almost entirely to the local congregations. And at times, as in the days of Charles McMillan, the Association had often taken the initiative but had insisted that all missions be sponsored by one or more local congregations. In the early 1980s, however, a different philosophy appeared. The Home Mission Board and other denominational entities began to move from the concept of "church extension" for starting new churches to the idea of "church planting." Talk of "missions" which were expected to grow into churches faded into the background, and talk about "church starts" and "church planters" became common.

In her work with church planters, Buffaloe's role was advisory rather than supervisory. She was not responsible for finding places where new churches were needed, but for assisting the church planters who began their work in new places. The mission function of the Association was not to start churches but to determine which new groups it could help and to what extent it could provide financial assistance. Almost gone was the careful planning of the past, and in its place was the spontaneous

sense of an individual or of a small group that a church was needed in a specific place.

Almost gone, but not quite. Buffaloe did not simply keep tabs on the starts; she even helped investigate possible locations. She reported to the Executive Committee on March 25, 1997, for example, that she was looking into the possibility of a church start at Cinnamon Ridge. She stated that Mt. Moriah was interested in starting a mission at Neuse River and Covered Bridge, and that she had driven around to find a location that might be available. And at the October meeting of the Association that same year she contrasted the 21.5% population growth of Wake County between 1990 and 1995 with the .7% growth in membership in Baptist churches! Saying that there had been only one church start during the past year, she identified four areas which the Association had targeted for church starts and said that they were "seeking to secure sponsoring churches to assist with these new works." The next year, reporting for the Church Extension and Language Commission at the annual fall session (October 27, 1998), Tony Cartledge noted that the Triangle is the fifth fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States, said "We are grateful to the people who have started three new churches this past year."

At the March 27, 2001, meeting of the Missions and Ministry Council shows the kind of activity in which Buffaloe was engaged under the new structure. She said that during the past quarter she had

- Met with four persons regarding church planting.
- Reviewed the work of Don Brown, church planter of The Village Church.
- Met with four churches regarding a new work start in Heritage Community, Wake Forest.
- Conducted a mini-probe of Western Johnston County (partnership with Johnston Association).
- Met with Mike Adams, a church planter in the Cary area, regarding strategy for his launch time in the fall. Several additional meetings with him.
- Along with two other persons, met with Al Marguerat regarding his ministry as pastor at West Lake Baptist Church "and how we can be of assistance to him."
- Held a Church Planter Luncheon network meeting.
- Held three ministerial staff meetings.

- Attended numerous committee meetings.
- Led North American Mission study at Cary First Baptist.

The term, "church planter," was not in common usage in the Association until the mid 1990s. Roy Smith did not use the term, and neither did others in the Association. When Cindy Buffaloe was employed in 1995, however, she came as part-time "Consultant for Church Planting, Migrant Ministry and Multi-Housing." Not long after she began her work, in January, 1996, the Association entered into an agreement with the New Community Church to employ a "Church Planter Intern" who was to be "available to churches in RBA to assist with multicultural populations with some emphasis on work with professional African-Americans." That project was partly funded by a grant from the Baptist State Convention. From that time on the term was in common usage.

Like pastors and deacons, the church planters who worked in Wake County, were a varied lot. Some were employed by an Association and/or the State Convention with a specific assignment. James Richardson, the Raleigh Association's Church Planter Intern in 1996, fell into that category. So did Kennard Weever, with whom representatives from the Baptist State Convention and the Raleigh Association met in the fall of 2004 to discuss the "lack of strategy for starting a church around Hope Fellowship. We have encouraged him to re-work his plan." (Missions/Ministries Minutes, Nov. 23, 2004)

Some church planters were drafted by a group to take the lead in establishing a church. One such person was Ted Wilbanks, who worked with the Cleveland Baptist Church being established early in 1998. In her report to the Executive Committee on March 31, 1998, Cindy Buffaloe said of him, "I will also be looking for someone to serve as a mentor for Ted as he learns about what it means to be a church planter." She added that he planned to attend a Baptist State Convention "Church Planter Training" program. Another was James Tilton, a church planter called in 2001 by the Riverwood Church Start group. That work was sponsored by the Mt. Moriah Church and Central Church in the Raleigh Association and by the Johnston Association. Buffaloe's report on that work included a copy of "a covenant between all the churches concerned, the Johnston Baptist Association, the RBA the BSC of NC, and the North American Missions Board."

Other church planters apparently functioned independently and without organizational support. While Roy Smith did not use the term "church planter," in November, 1993, he told the Executive Committee that "Mike Beasley is interested in starting a church in South Raleigh." Cindy Buffaloe, however, used the term regularly. In August, 1995, she informed the Executive Committee that "Don Cashwell has requested sponsorship as a church planter in the Planters Walk area of Knightdale." She reported to the Executive Committee in November, 1997, that she had recently met Darren Talley, "a new church planter" who had recently moved into the Willow Springs area and was looking for a place to hold services. On July 24, 2001, she told the Missions and Ministry Council about Steve Nicholson who wanted to work with both the Yates and the Raleigh Associations in beginning a new church in the Morrisville/Durham area.

Yet the belief persisted that the best way was for churches to start churches, and the Association tried to provide some structure for that to happen. At the Executive Committee meeting on March 30, 1999, Roger Nix said that "the Association is working with the BSC on a strategy for starting new churches in the new century. How to partner churches. Goal is to (1) begin one or two a year for the next five years, (2) partner two churches with the Association to start churches." The following August the Mutual Care Commission informed the Executive Committee that they were "working to educate churches that churches start new churches not the Raleigh Baptist Association." Caralie Brown, who chaired the Church Start Team in 2000, introduced the team's annual report to the Association by citing the rapid growth of the population of the area and acknowledging that "There are various ways of aiding in the formation of new churches." But she ended her report with the observation "More of our established churches need to consider forming new churches with core groups from a mother church who will be a nucleus for the new start. This would ensure more stability and support for the new church from the very beginning."

In her report on church starts during the year 2000, Cindy Buffaloe stated that the team had worked with three church starts, had continued financial support of three others, and had conducted a probe of northeastern Wake County in which they identified five likely areas for new churches. Then she said that the Team had spent the year developing a set of guidelines for funding "Church Plant Partnerships."

The guidelines were prefaced by a statement of the assumptions that

- Churches plant churches.
- The guidelines would be used to determine the degree of eligibility for financial assistance from the Association.
- Church plants would become financially self-sustaining within two years.
- Decisions would be based on need and availability of funds.
- Guidelines would reflect the increasing ethnic and cultural diversity of the area.

The Guidelines Checklist focused on qualified leadership, sponsorship by established churches, careful planning, cooperation with the Association, and accountability.

With so many church starts over which the Association had no control, and with the Association's limited financial resources, inevitably difficult decisions had to be made about which church starts the Association could support. Responsible for making those decisions, the Church Extension and Language Ministries Commission drew up a set of guidelines which they presented to the Executive Committee on August 25, 1998, and which was approved at the January, 1999, quarterly meeting of the Association. The first section of the guidelines required an initial conference between representatives of the new work, the State Convention's new work team, and the Raleigh Association. The second section called for an assessment of the church planter. The third asked for the sponsorship of one or more churches. The fourth provided for a steering committee from the sponsoring churches which would operate for two years. The fifth called for an annual evaluation for the first two years. The sixth asked for active involvement in the work of the Association. And the last specified that funding from the Association would continue for a minimum of two years and a maximum of three.

While the guidelines were helpful, there was no way to enforce them and there were frequent exceptions to the pattern. Buffaloe's report to the Council on July 23, 2002, is illustrative. She spoke of meeting with two "prospective church planters." The first was Chris Murray, who "hopes to begin a church in the northern part of Rolesville." He had talked with the Director of Missions in the Tar River Association and had attended

the Church Planter Basic Training program. Buffaloe and Roger Nix had met with him "and talked about his vision for this new church start and how we might be able to partner together in this new work." That statement sounds as if he had acted on his own in seeking a place to establish a church. The second was Byron Stallings, who was interested in a ministry to people in the Raleigh area that he called "down and out." He planned to begin holding meetings in the old Tower Shopping Center theater complex. Buffaloe added, "We recommended the Church Planter Basic Training and his contacting the Church Planting Team of the BSCNC. He is looking for guidance and direction in this church plant and not asking for funding."

In her annual report to the Association in the fall of 2002 Buffaloe said that the Association's goal was "to intentionally plant at least one new church each year." She reiterated the philosophy that "Churches plant churches," saying that church planters are more successful when they network with local congregations, the association, and state convention and mission boards. Then she cited two church starts that had cooperated with the Association during the past year, and two others that had completed their second year of funding from the Association.

Not all "plants" became churches, and some that did become churches never affiliated with the Association. Between 1994 and 2005, a total of twenty new congregations came under the watchcare of the Association. During that same period thirteen churches were accepted into full membership, two of which were transfers from the Christian Church, and another transferred from the Johnston Association. The totals, however, give some indication of the rate at which new churches were being planted as well as the percentage of church plants that ultimately became member churches of the Association.

As the population of Wake County had become increasingly diverse in ethnic background, the Raleigh Association had attempted in a variety of ways to minister to the newcomers. Upon the resignation of Roy Smith, who had been responsible for "Church Extension and Language Ministry," the Association had divided his responsibility between part-time consultants. Charles Farag was employed as Consultant for Multicultural/Ethnic Ministry and began his work in the fall of 1994. Partial support for his work was provided by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. When Farag accepted the position, the Association was already working with eight ethnic congregations:

Korean First Baptist Church

- African Baptist Mission—sponsored by Forest Hills
- Arab Mission led by Farag—meeting at Trinity
- Asian-Indian Mission—sponsored by Providence
- Japanese Mission—sponsored by Raleigh's First Baptist
- First Korean Baptist Church—originally meeting at Cary First; but recently moved to Ray Road in their permanent location
- Bautista Hispana Nueva Esperanza—sponsored by New Hope
- Spanish Mission of Western Wake County—sponsored by Greenwood Forest and Salem
- Portuguese speaking group—sponsored by Forest Hills

Farag's annual reports to the Association consisted of brief statements about the establishment of new missions and the work of each mission in operation. When Farag left his work with the Association in 2005, there were fourteen churches and missions on the list:

- United African Baptist Church—sponsored by Forest Hills
- Trinity Arabic Baptist Church—sponsored by Trinity
- Chinese Baptist Church—sponsored by Forest Hills
- Farsi Ministry—sponsored by Forest Hills
- Glory of God Christian Fellowship (Filipino)—meeting at Ephesus
- Emmanuel French Church—sponsored by Emmanuel
- Apex Baptist Hispanic Ministry—sponsored by Apex Baptist
- Iglesia Bautista Nueva Esperanza—sponsored by New Hope

- Iglesia Bautista Monte Olivo Hispanic—sponsored by Mount Olivet
- International Community Church (Asian-Indian)—sponsored by Providence
- Japanese Mission—sponsored by First Baptist, Raleigh
- Korean First Baptist
- Korean Baptist Mission of Raleigh (Mt. Vernon)
- Vietnamese Mission—sponsored by New Hope

Establishing an Admission Policy

One of the most striking developments in the life of the Association at the turn of the century was the increasing diversity in its member churches. The non-creedal character of Baptists naturally resulted in differences of theology, the non-liturgical character of their worship naturally resulted in differing types of services, and the non-authoritarian character of their denomination naturally resulted in differing forms of organization. In addition, denominational identification was becoming relatively insignificant to an increasing number of people. In an attempt to reach a wider range of people, a growing number of churches de-emphasized such connections by choosing names which had no denominational designation. The ideal of the Raleigh Baptist Association to be both Baptist and inclusive was reflected in its theme for the year 2002: "Post 9-11 ... Embracing our Diversity-Affirming our Unity." But was it possible to achieve the ideal? In his written message to the Association that year, Executive Director Roger Nix affirmed the ideal even as he recognized the problem:

> **Churches, just because they are Baptist, are not all alike and must have the freedom to be different.** Today we label congregations with theological/political terms like moderate, conservative, and fundamentalist. And the latest so called "worship wars" controversy has its own terms like traditional, blended and contemporary. Each church has the autonomous right and responsibility to exercise this freedom of self-determination.

Neuva Esperanza

In the years prior to the change in structure adopted by the Association in 2000, the Mutual Care Commission was responsible for recommending churches for acceptance under watchcare and/or into full membership. In the spring of 1995 the Commission faced the fact that some churches seeking membership differed in theology and in organization from the traditional Baptist pattern. They began to feel the need for a standard by which to decide whether to recommend acceptance. On March 28, 1995, they reported to the Executive Committee that they had asked three churches "that have elders rule as a part of their church to write a paper explaining eldership." They announced that because several other churches seeking membership followed that practice, they were planning a group conference on the subject. One member of the Executive Committee said, "I realize that more new churches are adopting this model, but is this coming out of the seminaries now?"

When the annual session of the Association was held in October, 1995, the Commission reported on their action and announced that they were exploring the possibility of formulating a set of "Membership Guidelines." In subsequent meetings of the Executive Committee they reported on their progress, observing that one thing they considered

important was "meaningful participation in and contribution to the work of the association." On October 29, 1996, they reported that they had created a form "to aid the watchcare congregation in evaluating its readiness to become a full member." They stated that the "new process was approved by the Association at its quarterly meeting in January, and has been well received by the churches who have used the process this year."

One month later, on November 26, the Commission informed the Executive Committee that they had "composed a form letter which could be sent to churches as their year under watchcare comes to a close. A report would be made by the church to the association which would be a self-evaluation." The Commission asked for approval at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. The minutes do not show that any action was taken, but the policy must have been approved, for it was implemented early in 1997. At the February 25, 1997, meeting of the Executive Committee the Mutual Care Commission distributed copies of the letter that were to be mailed to the churches in the watchcare process. The letter stated that failure on the part of the church to show actual participation in the work of the Association warranted the Commission's asking for another meeting with them. But something seems to be missing: There was no reference to the specific issue which had occasioned the beginning of the process two years earlier—the presence of "elders" in the organizational structure of some churches! Instead, the standard focused on cooperation.

At last, however, a standard for recommending that watchcare churches be accepted into full membership was established. It does not take the form of an "evaluation tool" for the Association to use, but rather places upon the church the responsibility of deciding whether it really wants to be a part of the Association. While the original form which the churches were asked to complete has been revised slightly, to the present it remains essentially the same. It identifies meaningful participation in the Association as representation at regular meetings, financial contribution to the work of the Association, and participation in associational fellowship, missions, and professional growth conferences.

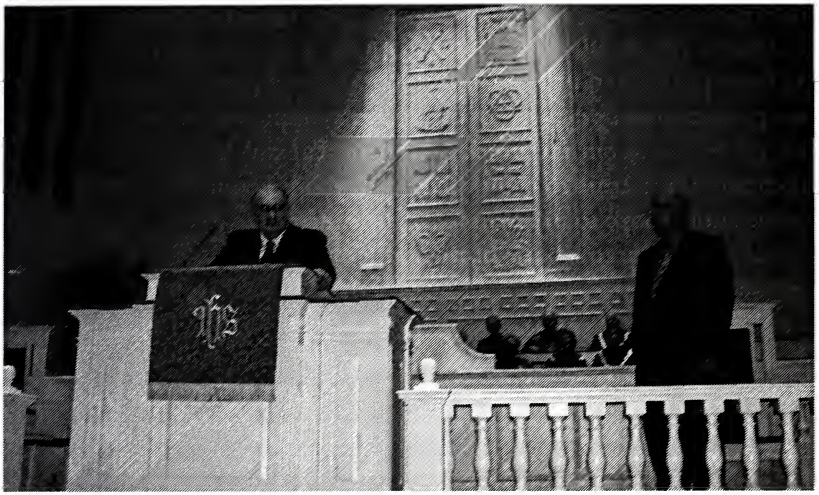
Diversity, therefore, continued to be a fact of life for the Association. In his report published in the 2001 Annual, Roger Nix took note of the fact that the Raleigh Association was the largest association in North Carolina, with 128 churches and missions and more than 60,000 church members. Those churches, he added, contributed heavily to the

Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. Then he spoke about differences among the churches:

> We have many churches that are trying to remain small and rural and some that are transitioning to large metropolitan regional congregations. Many worship in traditional form while an increasing number are blending their style or going to contemporary services. Our program of ministry seeks to minister and partner to this broad congregational identity.

The effort to establish an admission policy had not been an attempt to exclude any congregation, but rather to provide a tool by which the Association and new congregations might determine whether they could cooperate with each other in ministry and mission. The careful and honest use of such a tool could be of great value to both parties. Yet the adoption of the policy did not and could not avert the difficulties of decision-making. In 2002, the year in which the constitution was

200th Anniversary Worship



200th Anniversary Roll Call of the Churches by Dr. Roger Nix

amended to make specific what was meant by "supporting the ministry and mission of the Association," Roger Nix spoke about the "mission and value of associations" in his annual report, making four points:

1. Churches need to experience fellowship with sister churches.
2. Churches, just because they are Baptist, are not all alike and must have the freedom to be different.
3. Churches need each other.
4. Churches are at their best when a spirit of kingdom cooperation is present.

The Present and the Future

The celebration of an anniversary makes one think about the future. Fruitful thought about the future must begin with the realities of the present. In 2005 the genius of the Raleigh Baptist Association was reflected not so much in which churches were identified with the Association as in what the member churches were doing together. That fact was reflected in the reorganization that took place in 2000, when

the traditional "departments" were replaced by "ministry teams," with the Association and the churches working together on specific projects.

So what were the churches doing together in 2005? By the end of that year, working in the area of Missions and Ministry, the Association's "Hope Builders" had repaired more than a hundred homes of elderly people living on "fixed incomes." Bill Kibler and Morris Ashcraft were the leaders of this ministry. Raleigh Association churches fed thousands of young people and adult "World Changers" as they visited Wake County during the summer working on home repairs for the underprivileged. In disaster relief the churches had provided food, physical labor, love, encouragement, prayer, and financial support during hurricanes, tornados, tsunamis, floods, and terrorist attacks. In 2005 the Association purchased and upfitted a Disaster Relief Shower Trailer. Nearly fifty churches cooperated in the Food Round-up for Baptist Children's Homes. Many churches provided Christmas cakes, as well as gift cards and money for women in the State Correctional Center for Women. "Christian Women's Job Corps," begun in 1998, was a program in which Christian women mentor women trying to move from welfare into the work place. "Cornerstone Ministries" provided snacks and drinks to the homeless in downtown Raleigh.

In the area of Leadership Development, a Training Extravaganza was held at the end of the summer, offering conferences to help church leaders develop their abilities for church responsibilities. English as a Second Language Workshops were offered to train people in teaching English to internationals. Christian Leadership Training Seminars were offered through live satellite broadcasts. Training was offered for Vacation Bible School Workers, Ministry Assistants, and Deacons. Children's Choir Camps were provided during the summer, and GA Mother/Daughter Camps were held at Camp Mundo Vista.

Opportunities for Fellowship and Networking were offered through Senior Adult Rallies, Language Pastors' Fellowship, Church Planters' Network, Church Planters' Spouses Groups, RA Mission Fair and Car Race, Singles' Ministry gatherings, WMU Annual Meeting and Spring Missions Banquet, and networks for Religious Educators and Music Ministers.

The work in providing Resources and Consultation for the churches is not easily categorized, for the needs fluctuate so much. Help was offered the churches, however, in doing demographic studies of their

community, in strategic planning and visioning, and in making transition in times of difficulty or in times of population change. Help was available in conflict situations, both between pastor and people and within the congregation.

With all that the Association was doing, however, the two hundredth anniversary of its founding was clearly a time of decision. In January, 2005, Roger Nix said in *Connections* that the Association was faced with the choice between promise and probability. Promise, he said, "is the hope of what can be that has not been," and probability is "the likelihood that what has been will be once again." He spoke candidly about six issues which the Association faced which were "frustrating, conflicting, confusing, dividing, and hindering the growth and unity of many RBA churches": Change/transitions, Worship styles, Pastoral leadership styles, Clearly defining doctrinal/denominational identity, Vision for mission and ministry, and Conflict.

While Nix was realistic about the situation, he was also optimistic. In the fall of 2005 he spoke again to the ideal of unity and diversity in the Raleigh Association, noting that of the 131 churches and missions, twenty were language and ethnic congregations. He did not discuss the diversity in theology, church organization, and styles of worship that were quite apparent in the Association. Rather he affirmed that the churches had "chosen mutual cooperation and inclusiveness over independence and exclusiveness." He recognized that in making that choice the Association was brought face-to-face with a demanding challenge, saying:

> Our core values and vision statement call us to embrace the diversity which contributes to our ability to accomplish God's mission for this part of His vineyard. In the years before us Raleigh Baptists will be challenged to redefine the meaning and value of terms like cooperation, fellowship, partnership, and missions.

Was Nix's optimism justified? The Annual for 2005 names 110 churches and ten missions affiliated with the Association. The records show no significant change in membership, in involvement in church programs during the year, and in missions contributions. Nix observes that "Missions' giving continues a trend begun several years ago across the SBC of being either negligible or declining." He suggests the failure of the churches to increase their contributions for missions may have been

influenced by "tough economic times, personnel support decisions, new buildings, and the tendency toward 'keeping more for ourselves since we can control how it's spent'" (*Connections*, February, 2006) Another troubling fact which was not addressed was the failure of eighteen churches and six missions to send their annual Congregational Profile to the Association.

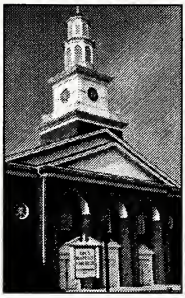
Yet, ninety-two churches and four missions, did make their annual report in 2005. Diverse as they were, each worshipped and studied, prayed and served, evangelized and engaged in mission activities. More than sixty-one thousand people were on the rolls of those churches, and on the average Sunday more than forty thousand of them were in Sunday school. Each church cooperated with the Association in a wide variety of ministries which none could have performed alone. Each was emotionally and spiritually in fellowship with other Baptists in proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God.

To Be Continued

The story has not ended. There is a continuity stretching from 1805 to 2005, and continuing as far ahead as who knows? All of the people who today care about the work of the Raleigh Baptist Association are the heirs of those who have given devoted service in the two hundred years gone by. They are at the same time the precursors of untold numbers yet to come. They have built upon the past and they are preparing for the future. Paul had it right when he said, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

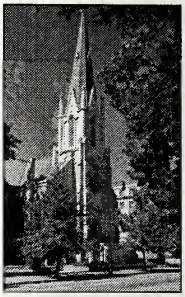
In the Dedication of the *2005 Annual* Roger Nix says exactly what needs to be said both about the past and about the future of the Raleigh Baptist Association:

> The obscure rugged paths and rural frontier of central North Carolina have given way to the beltline, outer loop, runways and the internationally known Research Triangle and twelve municipalities. The farmers, cobblers, blacksmiths, seamstresses, cooks and maids have transitioned into emergency and rescue personnel, construction workers, developers, teachers, professors, research scientists, computer technicians, engineers, physicians and many other vocations. This annual is dedicated to those who had the vision and wisdom to begin an association of churches at a time when there were no guarantees or promises that it would succeed. It is likewise dedicated to the spirit which resisted an anti-missionary movement among many Baptists of the nineteenth century. The *2005 Annual* is ultimately dedicated with the hope and prayer that God will continue to call out faithful people of vision and missionary spirit to lead the Raleigh Baptist Association into His glorious future until time fades into eternity.

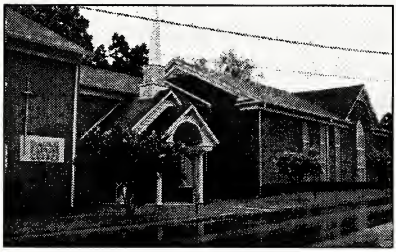


Apex Baptist Church

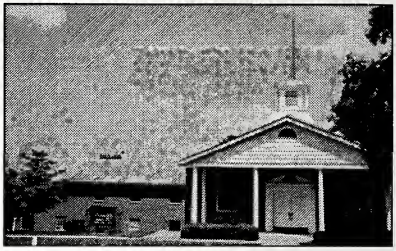
Bay Leaf Baptist Church



First Baptist Church



Emmanuel Baptist Church

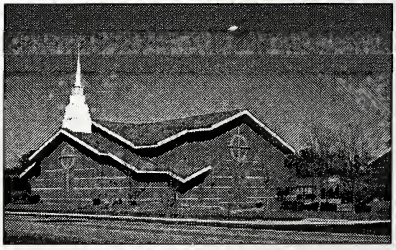


Falls Baptist Church

Fellowship Baptist Church

Glen Royal Baptist Church

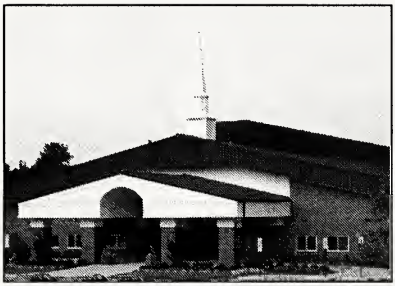
Longview Baptist Church



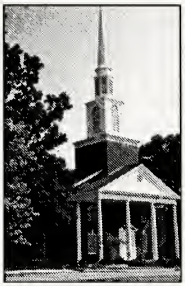
Mt. Vernon Baptist Church

Memorials/Dedications 1955 *ff*

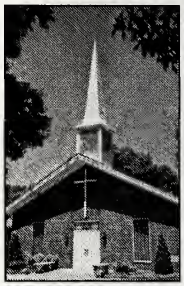
1954 Robert Hughes
C. A. Upchurch
1955 Thurman D. Kitchen
1956 E. McNeill Poteat
1957 Lee Pridgen
1958 W. R. Cullom
1959 J. Gray Murray
1960 No memorial
1961 LeRoy Martin
1962 John W. Kincheloe, Jr.
1963 Robert N. Simms, Jr.
1964 No memorial
1965 Leslie G. Bullard
1966 James P. Morgan
1967 Leon Spencer
Margaret Bright
1968 Bennett Straughn
1969 None
1970 Carey G. Mumford
1971 Charlie Herbert
1972 Robert L. and Ruth Costner
1973 W. C. and Mrs. Adkinson
Gracer Sorrell
Mrs. H. O. Holland
1974 L. James Morriss
1975 Hugh E. Cherry
1976 Mrs. Raeford (Ruth) Conn
1977 Robert L. Costner
1978 None
1979 None
1980 L. D. Holt
1981 Ronda Robbins
1982 James F. Heaton
1983 John E. Lawrence
1984 Mary Sue Pearce Williams
1985 T. L. and Helen Cashwell
1986 Mary Conn
1987 John M. Lewis
1988 Charles and Greta McMillan
1989 L. E. Forrest
1990 L. D. Holt
1991 Dorothy Loftin Goodwin
1992 Carl P. Holleman
1993 Charles L. McMillan, Jr.
1994 Jeffrey Nelson Maner
1995 Ernest C. Upchurch
1996 Elwood and Cleo Perry
1997 Richard Smith
1998 Leslie H. and Joanne Giles
1999 Wesley M. Enzor
Luther G. Brewer
George W. Pullium, Jr.
Baxter Prevatte, Jr.
2000 Tom and Eunice Bland
2001 Jack A. and Catherine S. Painter
2002 Bill Kibler
Morris Ashcraft
Shirlowe Powell
2003 Robert Ricks Boone, Jr.
2004 J. Marshall Neathery
2005 None



Richland Creek Baptist Church

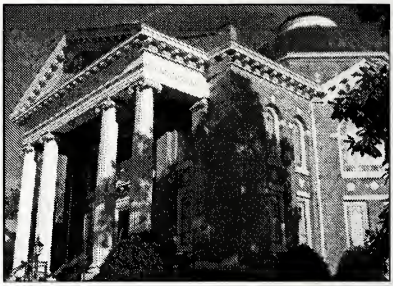


Ridge Road Baptist Church

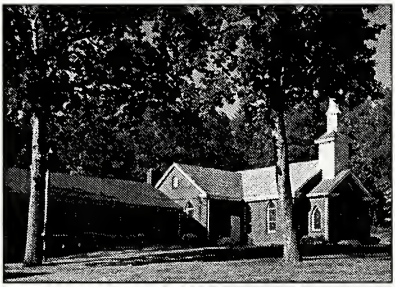


Swift Creek Baptist Church

Wake Cross Roads Baptist Church

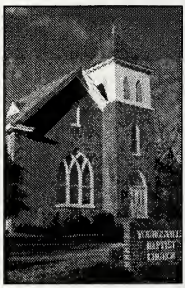


Wake Forest Baptist Church



Stony Hill Baptist Church

Trinity Baptist Church



Youngsville Baptist Church

Wakefield Baptist Church

Wake Union Baptist Church

Annual Sessions Historical Table

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1826	Mount Pisgah	John Purify	Thomas Crocker			John Purify
1827	Poplar Spring					E. Trice
1830	Haywood	James Southerland	Thomas Crocker			Thomas Crocker
1832	Shady Grove	John Purify	G. W. Purify			Stephen Senter
1833	Smithfield	G. W. Thompson	G. W. Purify			D. S. Williams
1834	Raleigh					Q. M. Trotman
1836		James Dennis	Williams Roles			James Dennis
1837	Cedar Fork					John Armstrong
1839	Muddy Spring	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			John Purify
1840	New Hope	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			A. J. Battle
1841	Holly Spring	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			W. A. Atkinson
1842	Friendship	S. Senter	S. P. Norris			C. L. Frey
1843	Wake Bethel	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			David Thomson
1844	Hephzibah	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			Elisha Webb
1845	Mount Pisgah		S. P. Norris			P. W. Dowd
1846	Spring Branch	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			James Dennis
1847	Cumerland Union	James Dennis	S. P. Norris			James Purefoy*
1848	Wake Union	D. S. Williams	S. P. Norris			Johnson Olive
1849	Friendship	D. S. Williams	S. P. Norris			L. C. Hinton
1850	Smithfield	P. W. Dowd	S. P. Norris			J. C. Marcom
1851	Neil's Creek	P. W. Dowd	J. C. Marcom			P. W. Dowd
1852	Rolesville	S. Senter	S. P. Norris			W. M. Wingate
1853	Salem	S. Senter	S. P. Norris			Sam. Senter
1854	Johnston Liberty	S. Senter	S. P. Norris			Johnson Olive
1855	Piney Grove	S. Senter	D. B. Holland			Johnson Olive
1856	Hephzibah	P. W. Dowd	D. B. Holland			T. E. Skinner
1857	Cedar Fork	P. W. Dowd	D. B. Holland			J. C. Marcom
1858	Mount Moriah	P. W. Dowd	D. B. Holland			Johnson Olive
1859	Cumberland Union	P. W. Dowd	D. B. Holland			J. S. Purefoy

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1860	Wake Cross Roads	J. S. Purefoy	D. B. Holland			P. W. Dowd
1861	Holly Spring	J. S. Purefoy	D. B. Holland			Stinson Ivey
1862	New Bethel	J. S. Purefoy	D. B. Holland			A. D. Blackwood
1863	Piney Grove	J. S. Purefoy	D. B. Holland			J.S. Purefoy
1864	Rolesville	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			J.C. Marcom
1865	Ephesus	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			J.S. Purefoy
1866	Olive Chapel	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			J.C. Marcom
1867	Friendship	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			A. D. Blackwood
1868	Bethesda	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			A. T. Walters
1869	Bethany	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			O. Churchill
1870	Shady Grove	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			Amos Weaver
1871	Hephzibah	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			Johnson Olive
1872	Johnston Liberty	A. D. Blackwood	D. B. Holland			J.C. Marcom
1873	Lillington	J. C. Marcom	D. B. Holland			Amos Weaver
1874	Selma	J. C. Marcom	D. B. Holland			J.C. Marcom
1875	Cary	D. B. Holland	J. Q. Williams			Stinson Ivey
1876	Pleasant Grove	D. B. Holland	J. Q. Williams			Amos Weaver
1877	Apex	D. B. Holland	J. Q. Williams			G. J. Dowell
1878	Whitestone	D. B. Holland	J. M. Broughton			W. R. Gwaltney
1879	Mount Hermon	D. B. Holland	J. M. Broughton			Elias Dobson
1880	Shiloh	D. B. Holland	J. M. Broughton			Allen Betts
1881	Holly Springs	D. B. Holland	J. M. Broughton			W. R. Gwaltney
1882	Hephzibah	D. B. Holland	N. B. Broughton			J. K. Howell
1883	Salem	D. B. Holland	L. O. Lougee			J. B. Boothes
1884	Mount Moriah	D. B. Holland	L. O. Lougee			A. D. Hunter
1885	Inwood	N. B. Broughton	L. O. Lougee			W. A. Nelson
1886	Selma	J. C. Scarborough	L. O. Lougee			O. L. Stringfield
1887	Morrisville	J. C. Scarborough	L. O. Lougee			J. R. Jones
1888	Johnston Liberty	J. C. Scarborough	L. O. Lougee			S. H. Thompson
1889	Whitestone	W. J. Ferrell	L. O. Lougee			A. D. Hunter
1890	New Bethel	W. J. Ferrell	L. O. Lougee			J. J. Hall
1891	Green Level	W. J. Ferrell	L. O. Lougee			J. J. Hall

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1892	Smithfield	E. S. Moore	L. O. Lougee			Worley Creech
1893	Mount Moriah	H. W. Norris	L. O. Lougee			J. W. Carter
1894	Cary	H. W. Norris	L. O. Lougee			A. M. Simms
1895	Hephzibah	H. W. Norris	J. C. Birdsong			O. L. Stringfield
1896	Shiloh	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			(none)
1897	Mount Hermon	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			W. H. Davis
1898	Johnston Antioch	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			J. F. Tuttle
1899	Holly Springs	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			A. D. Hunter
1900	Baptist Centre	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			John Lewis
1901	Morrisville	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			A. A. Butler
1902	Lee's Chapel	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			W. D. Hubbard
1903	Smithfield	J. M. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			S. W. Oldham
1904	Shady Grove	E. L. Middleton	J. C. Birdsong			J. M. White
1905	Cary	E. L. Middleton	G. M. Beavers			R. J. Bateman
1906	Leesville	E. L. Middleton	J. C. Birdsong			J. C. Massee
1907	Wakefield	E. L. Middleton	J. C. Birdsong			W. R. Beach
1908	Green Level	N. B. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			L. M. Hobbs
1909	McCullers	N. B. Broughton	J. C. Birdsong			A. J. Moncrief
1910	Apex	N. B. Broughton	T. C. Council			E. M. Lassister
1911	Knightdale	N. B. Broughton	T. C. Council			L. E. M. Freeman
1912	Fuquay Springs	N. B. Broughton	T. C. Council			J. N. Hilliard
1913	Cary	N. B. Broughton	T. C. Council			A. V. Joyner
1914	Inwood	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			W. P. Campbell
1915	Good Hope	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			J. N. Cowan
1916	Leesville	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			W. L. Griggs
1917	Zebulon	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			J. H. Barnes
1918	Meeting called off due to Spanish Influenza epidemic					
1919	Collin's Grove	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			(none)
1920	Hephzibah	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			J. A. Ellis
1921	Salem	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			T. S. Guy
1922	Swift Creek	A. B. Hunter	T. C. Council			G. T. Mills

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1923	Knight's Chapel	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			C. L. Greaves
1924	Apex	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			S. W. Oldham
1925	Zebulon	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			C. F. Hudson
1926	Cary	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			J. P. Harris
1927	Pleasant Grove	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			R. F. Hall
1928	Green Level	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			E. G. Davis
1929	Holly Springs	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			G. N. Cowan
1930	Fuquay Springs	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			R. H. Herring
1931	Wendell	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			Jesse McCarter
1932	Ephesus	J. D. Berry	T. C. Council			R. F. Hall
1933	Pullen	J. D. Berry, S. W. Oldham	T. C. Council			F. C. Feezor
1934	Salem	S. W. Oldham	T. C. Council			L. R. Evans
1935	Hephzibah	L. R. Evans	T. C. Council			O. G. Tillman
1936	Good Hope	L. R. Evans	T. C. Council			G. T. Mills
1937	Pleasant Grove	L. R. Evans	T. C. Council			C. L. Ousley
1938	Apex	R. N. Simms, Jr.	T. C. Council			T. S. Lawrence
1939	Bethlehem	R. N. Simms, Jr.	T. C. Council			G. J. Griffin
1940	Green Level	D. M. Branch	T. C. Council			J. R. Link
1941	Holly Springs	D. M. Branch	T. C. Council			L. C. Sheppard
1942	Zebulon	F. A. Burns	R. T. Stancil			G. A. Hendricks
1943	Fuquay Springs	G. J. Griffin	R. T. Stancil			W. S. Caudle
1944	Tabernacle	G. J. Griffin	R. T. Stancil			F. O. Mixon
1945	Wake Forest	F. H. Scofield	R. T. Stancil			C. M. Townsend
1946	Cary	C. O. Greene	R. T. Stancil			W. M. Page
1947	Calvary	C. O. Greene	Miss Eliz. Murray			J. U. Garner
1948	Wendell	C. G. Mumford	Carlton Mitchell			B. E. Jones
1949	Memorial Auditorium, Raleigh, Franklinton	C. G. Mumford	Carlton Mitchell			Samuel Johnson
1950	Fall: Meredith College and Pullen Memorial	E. J. Rogers	Carlton Mitchell			J.W. Kincheloe
	Spring: Tabernacle					L. Bun Olive
1951	Zebulon	E. J. Rogers	Carlton Mitchell			Ross Cadle

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1952	Raleigh, Green Level	J. G. Murray	A. Douglas Aldrich			J. L. Coley
1953	Hayes Barton	J. Gray Murray	A. Douglas Aldrich	L.G. Bullard	Lee Pridgen	W. Marshall Craig
1954	Rolesville	J. Gray Murray	A.L. Aycock	L.G. Bullard	Lee Pridgen	L.J. Morriss
1955	Wake Forest	R.N. Simms, Jr.	A.L. Aycock	L.G. Bullard	Lee Pridgen	Joe Roach
1956	Apex	R.N. Simms, Jr.	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	Lee Pridgen	M.O. Sears
1957	Raleigh First	J.W. Kincheloe, Jr.	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	James S. Potter
1958	Fuquay Springs	J.W. Kincheloe, Jr.	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Lamar Brooks
1959	Rolesville	Ronda Robbins	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	A. Douglas Aldrich
1960	Zebulon	Ronda Robbins	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Parks C. Harris
1961	Cary First	John M. Simms	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	L.D. Holt
1962	Garner	John M. Simms	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Crate Jones
1963	Knightdale	L.D. Holt	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	James F. Heaton
1964	Stony Hill	L.D. Holt	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Allen Laymon
1965	Salem	Marion Lark	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	W.T. Mills
1966	Wake Cross Roads	H.A. Hodge, Jr.	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Joe Zimmerman
1967	Wendell	H.A. Hodge, Jr.	Leon P. Spencer	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Robert Mullinax
1968	Ephesus	Lamar J. Brooks	Ted W. Williams	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	L.M. Woolweaver
1969	Apex	Lamar J. Brooks	Ted W. Williams	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	W.C. Adkinson
1970	Morrisville	L.E. Forrest	Ted W. Williams	L.G. Bullard	R.L. Costner	Rhonda Robbins
1971	Wendell	L.E. Forrest	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	John E. Lawrence
1972	Fuquay Varina	Charles T. Dorman	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	T.L. Cashwell, Jr.
1973	Knightdale	Charles T. Dorman	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	Harvey L. Duke
1974	Hephzibah	George P. Johnson	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	James F. Heaton
1975	Olive Chapel	George P. Johnson	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	W.J. Enzor
1976	Hayes Barton	Harvey L. Duke	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	John Lewis
1977	Zebulon	Harvey L. Duke	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	Jerald Fountain
1978	Ephesus	James Valsame	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	R.L. Costner	Talmadge Infinger
1979	Bethlehem	James Valsame	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Luther Brewer
1980	Greenwood Forest	Ted Janes	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Jack Coffey
1981	Apex	Ted Janes	Ted W. Williams	Ted W. Williams	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	W.C. Barham, Jr.
1982	Raleigh First	Dorothy Goodwin	Ted W. Williams	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Roger E. Nix
1983	Bay Leaf	Dorothy Goodwin	Ted W. Williams	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Willard Brown

Year	Place	Moderator	Clerk	Treasurer	Director of Missions	Preacher of Annual Sermon
1984	Pullen Memorial	Jack Coffey	Ted W. Williams	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	J. Marshall Neathery
1985	Aversboro Road	Jack Coffey	Ted W. Williams	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Johnny Smith
1986	Rolesville	Jack Porter	Ted W. Williams	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Grady Long
1987	Tabernacle	Jack Porter	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Leslie Giles
1988	Wake Forest, Calvary	Baxter Prevatte	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Steve Bolton
1989	Fuquay Varina, Trinity	Alton Strickland	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Horace Hamm
1990	Greystone, Hephzibah	Alton Strickland	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	J. Stancil Baucom
1991	Aversboro Road, Meredith College	Jerry Hayner	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	George W. Pullium, Jr.
1992	Highland, Temple	Jerry Hayner	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Robert Weatherspoon
1993	New Hope, Apex	Paul Wilms	Elwood Perry	L. E. Forrest	Charles L. McMillan, Jr.	Jim Bousman Charles McMillan
1994	Millbrook, Wendell	Paul Wilms	Elwood Perry	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Gene Akins
1995	Emmanuel, Samaria	Paul Wilms	Elwood Perry	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Paul Wilms Roger E. Nix
1996	Mt. Olivet	Mack Thompson	Elwood Perry	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Tony and Jan Cartledge
1997	Hayes Barton	Mack Thompson	Linda Perry Martha Williams	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Baxter Prevatte
1998	Tabernacle	Jack Glasgow	Phyllis Crane	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Tom and Eunice Bland
1999	Greenwood Forest	Jack Glasgow	Phyllis Crane	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	Jack Glasgow
2000	Salem, New Hope	Mark White	Phyllis Crane	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	
2001	Trinity, Ridge Road	Mark White	Phyllis Crane	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	
2002	Tabernacle, Good Hope	Charles Allard	Phyllis Crane Gail O'Dekirk	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	
2003	Mt. Moriah, Woodhaven	Charles Allard	Gail O'Dekirk Lynn Johnson	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	
2004	Fairview, Central	James Hartley	Lynn Johnson	Richard Smith	Roger E. Nix	
2005	Westwood, Hayes Barton	James Hartley	Lynn Johnson	Jim Turner	Roger E. Nix	
2006	Trinity, Zebulon	Harvey Whaley	Lynn Johnson	Jim Turner	Roger E. Nix	Roger E. Nix

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